GMA offered to send Erap to US, Satur claims

Story below, COL. 4

KC Concepcion's column "Kulit Co." starts today in Saturday Special Super!

SEE PAGE L3

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Saturday, November 15, 2003 ★★ 106 pages / 15 sections / vol. 18 / no. 340 P15 website: www.inq7.net

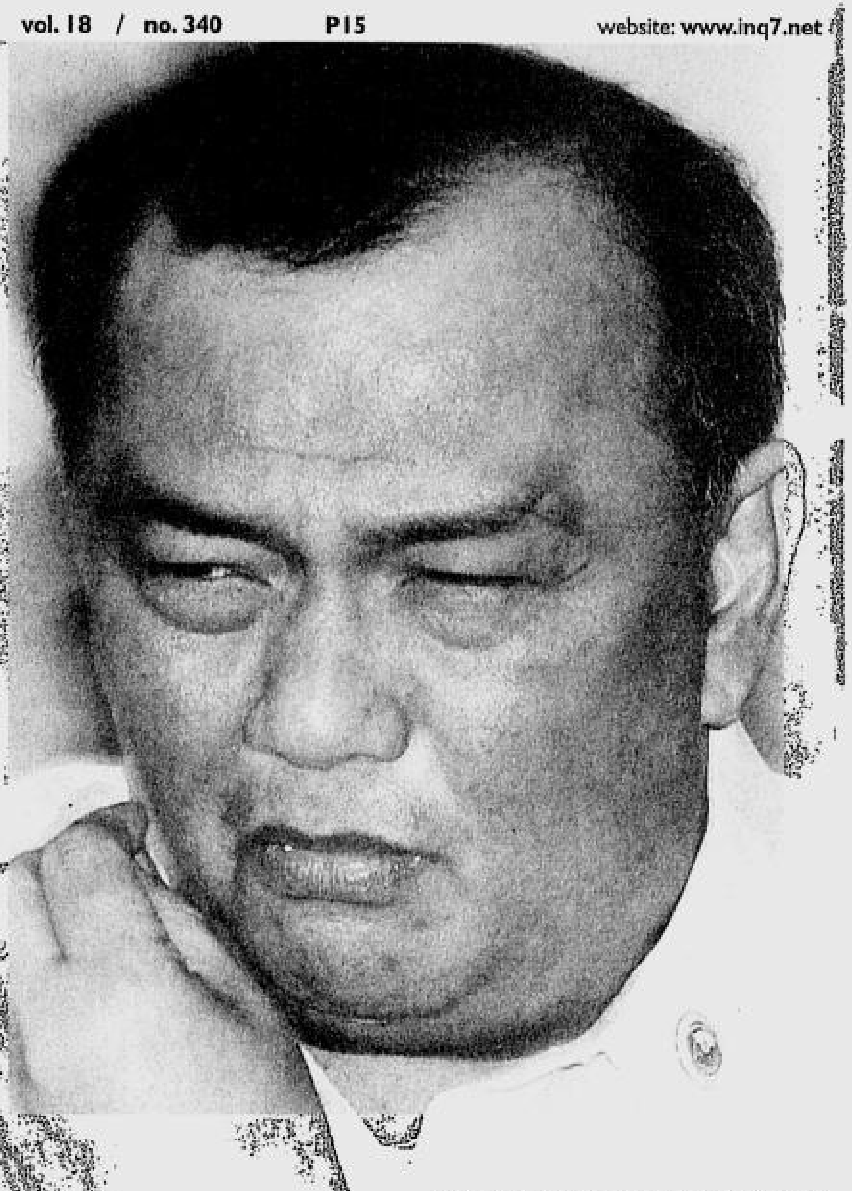
Kangaroos 'waltzing' wild in Paris forest

VERSAILLES, France—It may not be the scorching Australian outback, but fair dinkum, around 50 kangaroos that escaped a French animal park 30 years ago are happily living wild in a forest west of Paris.

ARE YOU FRENCH?
OUI

KANGAROOS/ A4

MJ convicted: 2 years in jail, $1.2M in fines



MARK JIMENEZ: I admit I committed the crime and I am paying for it, thanks to the justice system of America." PDI PHOTO

But ousted Manila solon to begin serving term on Jan. 5

By Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana

MARK Jimenez, disqualified from his congressional seat early this year for vote-buying, was convicted yesterday by a US court of electoral fraud.

The Southern District Court of Miami sentenced Jimenez to 27 months in prison after he pleaded guilty to election conspiracy and tax evasion charges. He was also ordered to pay $1.2 million in fines.

Interviewed on TV last night, Jimenez admitted his guilt. "*Talagang inaamin kong kasalanan ko 'yan at pagbabayaran ko ang kasalanan ko* (I admit I committed the crime and I will be paying for it)," he said, before thanking the "justice system [of] America."

He said he will start serving his sentence on Jan. 5 as approved by the Miami court which considered his coming birthday on Dec. 31 and the Christmas holidays.

He said that the US justice department had recommended that instead of a prison, he be held instead in a camp without fences, complete with tennis courts.

Asked if this didn't constitute VIP treatment, he said: "No, I didn't hurt anyone, the money came from my company."

Even though Jimenez, aka Mario Crespo,

MJ CONVICTED/ A22

Gutierrez, Demetriou trade barbs over Strunk

By Philip C. Tubeza and Leila Salaverria

THE BACK and forth has started in earnest.

An angry Justice Undersecretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez yesterday lashed out at critics, mainly Harriet Demetriou, for blaming the Department of Justice for its "negligence" which led to the dismissal of the extradition request for Rod Lauren Strunk, prime suspect in the gruesome murder of his wife, actress Nida Blanca.

A former Court of Appeals justice and chair of the Commission on Elections, Demetriou is the lawyer of Blanca's daughter Kaye Torres.

On Wednesday, California US District Court Judge Gregory Hollows denied the extradition of Strunk for lack of probable cause.

In his 37-page decision, Hollows called the government's evidence "a tangled web of accusation followed by supplementation, and sometimes even further supplementation without regard to consistency of accusation." *(See Page A22 for story on Hollows' decision.)*

GUTIERREZ/ A22

Family of 7 butchered in Zamboanga Norte

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Nine months after a similarly harrowing attack on the town, suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels killed a family of seven—six of them children aged 1 to 13—in Barangay Poblacion, Kalawit, Zamboanga del Norte, the military said yesterday.

Barely nine months ago, a similar attack by suspected MILF rebels in Kalawit's Tubod village left 14 people—including six children—dead and 10 others wounded.

Residents found the bodies of 40-year-old widow Evangeline Balios and her children Daniel, 13; Ariel, 11; Danny, 8; Julita, 5; Baby Boy, 3, and Mark, 1.

They had all been hacked to

FAMILY/ A8

Gloria offered to send Erap to US, Satur claims

By Cynthia D. Balana, Juliet L. Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

MALACAÑANG had offered to send deposed President Joseph Estrada to the United States for medical treatment as part of a political settlement, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo claimed yesterday.

The offer was part of President Macapagal-Arroyo's "total reconciliation" plan, Ocampo added.

Ocampo accused the President of conducting "dirty backstage political negotiations" as evidenced, he said, by Malacañang's pressure on government prosecutors to withdraw their opposition to Estrada's pending motion before the Sandiganbayan regarding his travel request.

Estrada vehemently denied that a deal had been struck (*See accompanying story*).

But the Palace chief of staff said the idea may be worth considering.

"Personally, I think that might not be a bad

GLORIA/ A22

Kuratong cops: Stop endless persecution

By Christine O. Avendaño and Philip Tubeza

CLAIMING to be "pawns [in] the dirty game of politics," the police officers who have been virtually cleared of the charge of conspiring to murder 11 members of the Kuratong Baleleng criminal syndicate yesterday appealed for an end to what they called their "endless persecution."

At a news conference at the launch of a group calling itself the Lawyers' Assembly for Clean, Stable and Orderly Nation (Lacson) at the Pan Pacific Hotel in Malate, 11 of the 33 members of the police team that carried out the operation against the Kuratong Baleleng in 1995 asked the government to put the case to rest so that they could be free to lead "normal lives."

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a principal accused in the

KURATONG/ A8

"FLOATING" for the past eight years, some of the police officers (center, Chief Supt. Francisco Zubia in red checkered shirt) accused in the Kuratong Baleleng multiple murder case, which was dismissed by a Quezon City judge on Wednesday, ask to be returned to their normal duties during a news conference which also launched the Lawyers Assembly for Clean, Stable and Orderly Nation (Lacson). ERIK ARAZAS

PNOC bags int'l Oscar for solar power project

By Ronnel Domingo

IN YET ANOTHER proof of Filipino excellence, the Philippine National Oil Co. won first prize in the Energy Globe Awards 2003 for its solar power project for rural homes.

The awards, presented in Linz, Austria last Wednesday, is considered the Oscars on the environment.

The organizers said they wanted to create publicity for projects that seek to conserve energy to protect the environment by combating global warming and the depletion of the earth's natural resources. This is the fourth year the awards have been handed out.

The PNOC was one of 10 winners that received a prize of 10,000 euros (approximately P643,000) and a 14-kg bronze statue of a hand holding a globe.

The PNOC bested two other nominees for the Fire Category.

The Belgian firm Solarmundo's linear fresnel solar power plant project won second prize while Danish firm Elsam's Harns Rev offshore wind farm project won third prize.

PNOC president Thelmo Cunanan, who is in Austria, said in a statement: "Getting international recognition for our solar project

PNOC/ A4

PNOC PHOTO

FIRST prize goes to PNOC for its 5-year solar power project which has installed to date 1,647 solar panels in remote households with 15,100 more coming up.

Aussie literacy project lifts lumad kids

By Anthony S. Allada
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—*Lumads* (natives), Moros and other people from educationally disadvantaged groups continue to benefit from an Australian government-backed literacy project being undertaken in Mindanao.

For the past 22 months, these groups have gained access to formal and nonformal education programs under the Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao (BEAM).

The project was launched in Southern and Central Mindanao and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in partnership with the Department of Education more than a year ago.

Dr. Ian D'Arcy Walsh, BEAM project director, said the first access program, the BEAM-Lumad Integrated Functional Education (BEAM-LIFE), was implemented in four villages in Davao del Sur: Little Baguio and Demoloc in Malita and North Lamidan and Baluntaya in Don Marcelino. All these villages have no public schools.

But through BEAM-LIFE, 179

AUSSIE/ A4

Second FrontPage

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindoro, Romblon, Palawan and Aklan will have stormy weather. Marinduque, Masbate and the rest of Panay Island will experience rains and gusty winds. The rest of Luzon and Visayas will be cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/15/03

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	**Roxas**	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Stormy	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

Ebdane: Copa, PMAP behind Makati rally

By Christian V. Esguerra

HAVE the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa) and the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP) joined forces in an effort to topple the Macapagal administration?

According to Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., the massive anti-administration rally in Makati City last Wednesday was led by Copa, allies-turned-critic of President Macapagal-Arroyo, backed by a contingent from the PMAP, staunch supporters of jailed former President Joseph Estrada.

Although Ebdane did not go so far as to say the two groups had entered into an unholy alliance, their mere association was critical, especially for Copa which has maintained a love-hate relationship with Ms Macapagal.

No less than the President had hinted that the aborted rally may have been part of another destabilization plot against her administration *(See adjacent story)*. This after police and military intelligence sources confirmed the mass action was a "test case" for another uprising similar to the July 27 Oakwood mutiny.

But a fuming Copa secretary general Pastor "Boy" Saycon yesterday disassociated his group from the PMAP and maintained that none of Copa's members was present during the rally on Ayala Avenue.

The authorities, he said, were floating stories that Copa was part of a coup attempt in order to discredit the group and prevent it from further disclosing alleged corruption in the Macapagal administration.

"I don't know where General Ebdane got his information that Copa was at the rally," Saycon told the INQUIRER. "But if this is the type of information that he's feeding the President, no wonder this administration has been committing a lot of mistakes."

Copa, he said, would never join forces with the PMAP, whose members his group had helped to block during the bloody Labor Day siege of Malacañang in 2001.

Enemies of state out to undermine polls, warns GMA

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Luige del Puerto

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday warned that anti-administration forces were again trying to destabilize her government and undermine the presidential election in 2004.

"There is a pattern of renewed destabilization to erode the looming electoral process and I call upon the people to stand for democracy," the President said in a speech in Cainta, Rizal, where she gave out land award certificates in Barangay San Juan.

She used the occasion to appeal to the people, "especially those who are poor," not to be "easily swayed by misinformation or enticement by groups seeking to bring down the government because your government is looking after the dignity of every Filipino."

On Wednesday, police used tear gas and water cannons against some 10,000 protesters in the Makati financial district who were demanding the resignation of the President, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Speaker Jose de Venecia after they refused to disperse when their permit to rally expired.

The President said on Thursday that the demonstrators, mostly supporters of ex-President Joseph Estrada, were "being misled out of desperation by some plotters of destabilization."

"We shall respect the right of protesters to express their political views and grievances but we would like to draw the line on the side of civility, lawful conduct and public order," she said yesterday.

And while she has called for reconciliation, she said she also "must stand in the way of anarchy."

"I extend my hand to my detractors but I cannot allow them to flaunt the law," the President said.

She asked leaders of protest actions to police their own ranks and impose discipline among their followers to avoid violent clashes with authorities.

She said the police and the military were standing by the "maximum tolerance" policy with demonstrators "but they are ready to enforce the full might of the law when required by any situation."

The organizers of the Wednesday protest action yesterday assailed the President for suggesting that the poor had been egged on by "unscrupulous political leaders" to join the rally.

"We are not robots or monkeys," said lawyer Estelita Cordero, spokesperson of the Oct. 28 Movement which organized the rally, in a phone interview.

"If GMA thinks the poor can't think for themselves, she is wrong. People went to Ayala not because they are pro-Estrada or anti-Davide or anti-Gloria. They went there because they are fed up with their miserable conditions, which GMA hasn't done anything to improve," she said.

US remains wary of JI, says antiterror envoy

By TJ Burgonio

THE UNITED States remains concerned over the ability of the regional terror network Jemaah Islamiyah to "move and communicate" in Southeast Asia despite the arrest of its senior leaders, the top US envoy for counterterrorism said yesterday.

J. Cofer Black, the US state department's antiterrorism coordinator, disclosed this yesterday after meeting with National Security Adviser Roilo Golez and representatives of the multi-agency Counterterrorism Task Force to draw up new mechanisms to combat terrorism in the region.

"The United States is concerned about the JI group in the region. It has some history to it. We're particularly concerned about their ability to move and communicate internationally in the region," Black said.

Black, however, said that the "US concern" about the JI threat has somewhat been "mitigated" by the increasing cooperation among countries in the region against terror.

"This concern is being mitigated by cooperation as evident in the countries in the region... by the support that the US has been able to give to its friends in the Philippines," he said.

Black also reiterated that the US policy in dealing with the JI and other terror groups remains the same. "First, to make no concessions to terrorists and to strike no deals; second, to bring terrorists to justice for their crimes; third, to isolate and apply pressure on states that sponsor terrorism and force them to change their behavior, and fourth, to bolster capability of these countries."

The US official lauded the Philippines' recent successes in its antiterror campaign that resulted in the arrest of some JI operatives, including bomb-making expert Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, Agus Dwikarna who was nabbed in March 2002 and Taufik Rifki, who was captured on Oct. 2.

"We are mindful and grateful for the successes and efforts of your government and your law enforcement organization in the counterterrorism fight," Black told reporters.

With Christian Esguerra

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Rebels mutilate Zambales man

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—New People's Army rebels in Zambales mutilated the corpse of a man they executed, cutting off his penis and stuffing it in his mouth, the military's Northern Luzon Command said in a statement.

Lt. Col. Preme Monta, Nolcom public information officer, identified the victim as Julio Romero of Barangay Balingcaguing, San Felipe, Zambales, reportedly an anti-communist activist.

Monta said Romero was seized and killed after 10 p.m. on Wednesday by about 15 rebels led by Charlie Daylo, alias Ka Joyen, of the Bataan-Zambales provincial command, also known as Glorietta.

"The victim's executioners were not content with peppering his body with bullets. They even cut off (his) penis and placed it in his mouth," Monta said.

In the statement, Nolcom chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Dominguez called the act "barbaric."

"These NPA are the people who call themselves protectors of human rights," Dominguez said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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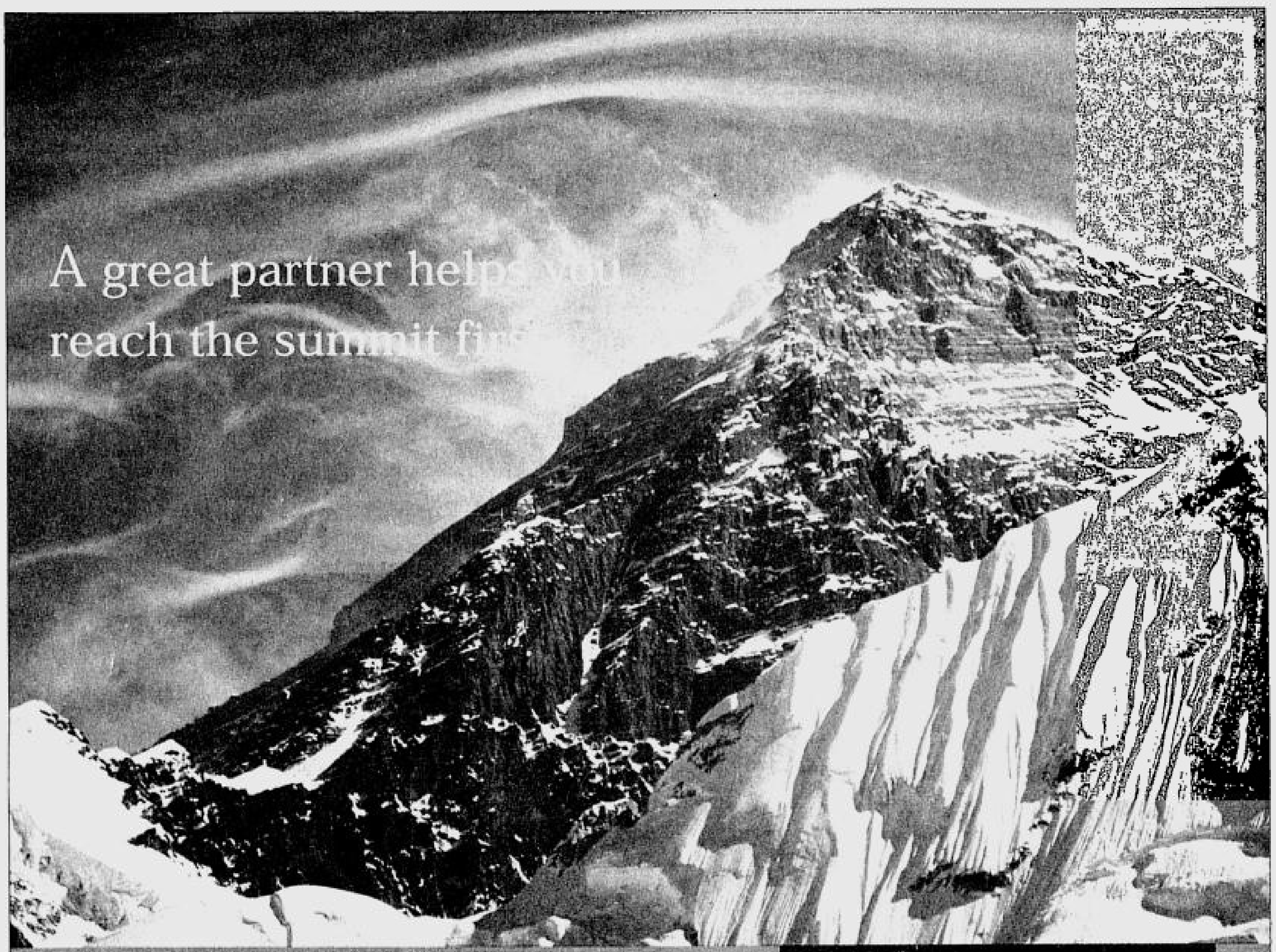

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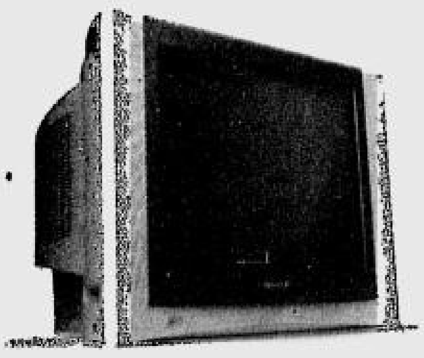

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LOCATION MAP BRANCH TWO

ELECTRICITY far beyond the city limits is provided by the PNOC's solar home system to address the needs of poor communities which cannot be serviced by the main power grids. PNOC PHOTO

PNOC bags environment Oscar

From page A1

is one big proof that we are able to provide a very efficient and effective system to address the needs of our country's communities which cannot be serviced by our main power grids."

5-year project

The PNOC's solar home system distribution project is being implemented in coordination with the Department of Energy and Shell Solar Philippines Corp. It is a five-year effort that was started in April 2002 through a 5.59-million euro (P359 million) grant from The Netherlands.

To date, the PNOC has installed 1,647 solar panels in remote households throughout the country. About 100-200 units are set up monthly.

Cooperatives

Aside from the power component, the solar home system package includes one black-and-white television set and a radio.

To make the package affordable to rural folk, a community-based credit program was set up to finance the costs through cooperative initiatives.

According to the PNOC, providing households with electricity has many positive effects. The economy is strengthened. Air, water and soil pollution are reduced. Literacy and life quality are improved, and better lighting makes reading and working easier. Health problems are reduced as people inhale less toxic fumes from kerosene lamps. And there is better access to information from TV and radio.

The PNOC expects to install 15,100 systems by the fifth year of implementation.

Clean factory

Another Energy Globe Award winner was the German energy technology company Solvis for its design for a "clean factory" which optimizes the use of solar energy and natural light. It uses no electricity and relies instead on solar heating panels and a heating system that burns vegetable oil.

According to Solvis, the extra cost of its technology is recovered within 10 years because of the amount of money saved on conventional heating.

Other winners

Other winners were a hydro-electrical plant built on the river Amoya in Colombia which finances environmental protection schemes and an energy-saving hotel chain in Mauritius.

Of the more than a thousand projects from all over the world that were nominated, India's Ananda Bose Water Save project was the only other nominee from Asia.

Categories

The Energy Globe Awards has five categories:

- Fire—for energy projects that tap renewable resources like sun, water, wind and biomass.
- Earth—for projects involving buildings and construction materials, traffic routes, raw material extraction and fuel production.
- Water—for projects related to drinking water supply, water consumption, irrigation, water sanitation and shipping.
- Air—for the protection of the atmosphere, reduction of greenhouse gases, efficient combustion and in-door air quality.
- Youth—for programs, projects, activities and initiatives in the field of environmental education that achieved an increasing environmental awareness.

The projects were evaluated based on sustainability and efficiency, innovativeness of approach, cost and benefit, and potential to be done elsewhere.

Austrian Environment Minister Josef Proell said the Energy Globe Awards prove that "sound economics and environmental protection are not mutually exclusive." *With a report from AFP*

Rina C. Luna, mother of four and diabetic,
on PHARMACOECONOMICS

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Aussie literacy . . .

From page A1

lumad pupils have finished early childhood education classes.

The number represents 78 percent of the total pupils enrolled in the classes. The graduates are now qualified to enter Grade I.

Four Tribal Learning Centers for early childhood education, functional literacy and Grade I classes have also been established.

BEAM-LIFE also has Functional Literacy Classes from which 100 parents and out-of-school youths have so far graduated.

The graduates have already put up livelihood enterprise projects.

Walsh said the project provided skills training and startup capital assistance to the learners. They were organized into cooperatives and are now into full production of vegetables, abaca fiber, vinegar and coconut-based food products.

Sultan Kudarat project

Another Australian government project, the BEAM-Providing Educational Access for Cultural Enhancement (BEAM-PEACE) is being implemented in at least eight barangays in the municipalities of Lebak and Kalamansig in Sultan Kudarat.

Walsh said that its major accomplishments were the education of 344 parents and out-of-school youths in Functional Literacy Classes, the establishment of a Cultural Learning Center and mobile learning facility, the development of indigenous learning materials, and the conduct of nutrition intervention activities in priority barangays through a Participatory Domiciliary for Nutrition Rehabilitation Training.

ARMM project

Another access-to-education project, the BEAM-Harnessing Opportunities for Muslim Education (BEAM-HOME), is being implemented in the ARMM.

Through the project, 530 sets of Learning Competencies Framework and Teachers manual in the teaching of Arabic language and Islamic studies have been printed and distributed to Arabic teachers.

Arabic language, values

BEAM-HOME has trained 117 Arabic teachers in the use of these modules and teacher guides.

The teaching of Arabic language and Islamic values in public elementary schools in the region has been mandated by the DepEd-ARMM.

Walsh said the success of the BEAM projects has greatly eased the DepEd's task of providing education to those who have limited access to schools.

The 5-year project's first phase is about to be completed.

The second phase, which will run until 2008, will soon start. The second phase has a total grant of P900 million spread in four years.

Kangaroos 'waltzing'. . .

From page A1

The grey marsupials broke free from the Emance nature reserve in the Yvelines department and are now bounding around woods bordering a dozen villages in the neighboring Eure-et-Loir department, Le Parisien daily reported.

'Joking Kangaroo'

"The kangaroos' presence in the forest didn't happen yesterday. They began making the woods their own after some people who tried to steal them released several of them," a park employee told AFP.

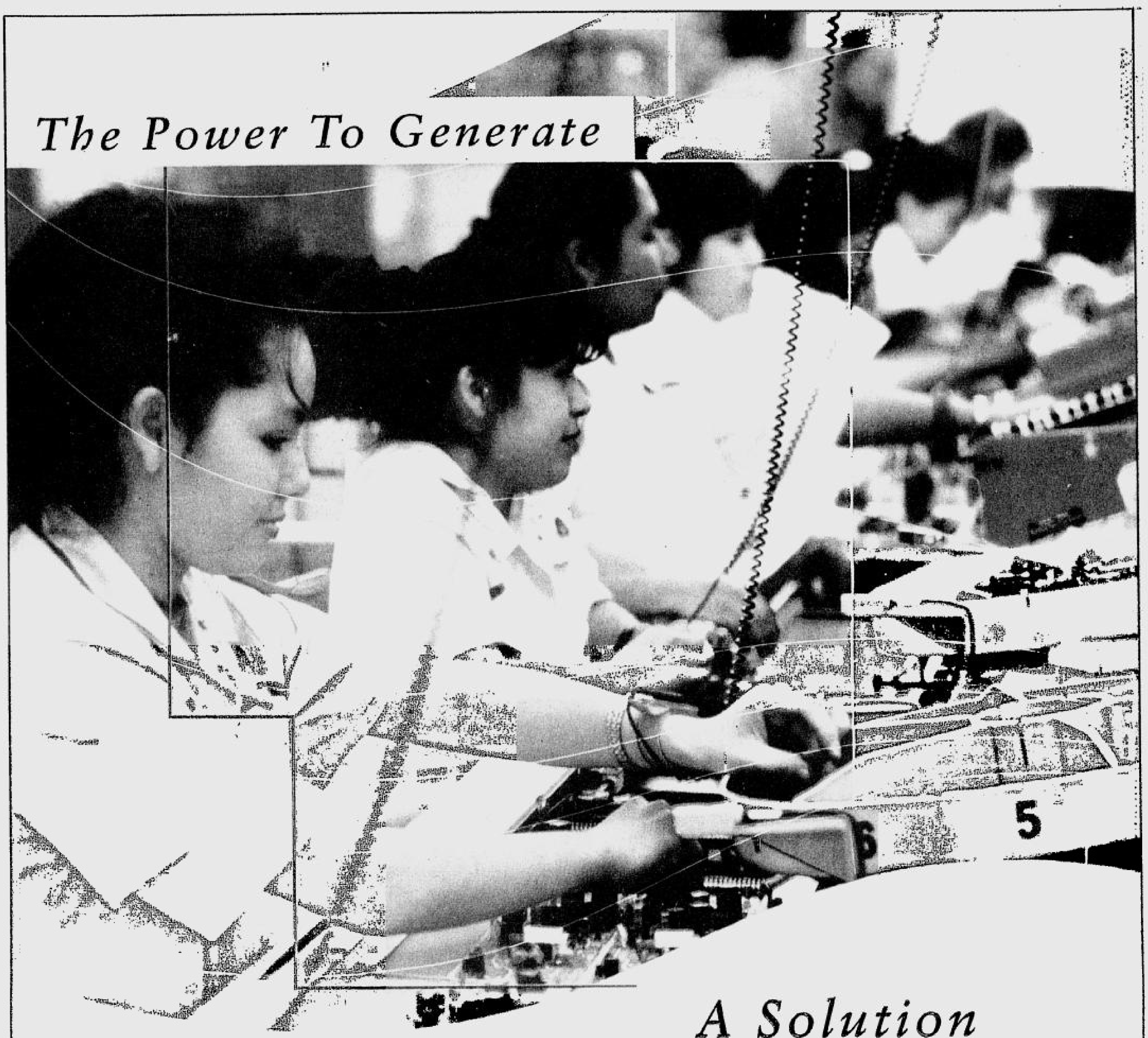
Signs signaling their presence have been erected along roads bisecting the southern part of the huge Rambouillet forest.

"Kangaroos have been part of our daily life for 20 years," said Francoise Grangeon, mayor of the town of Emance.

Even the magazine of the town school is called the "Joking Kangaroo", Grangeon said.

One expert said the kangaroos survive on buds and leaves, and reproduce in the month of August. AFP

The Power To Generate



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Villaruels to file charges

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—The family of slain former Air Transportation Office chief Col. Panfilo Villaruel will soon file criminal charges in court against all the members of the assault team and the officials who handled the 'botched' operation that killed Villaruel and his aide, Navy Lt. (sg) Ricardo Catchillar.

"The death of Villaruel was an overkill. Definitely, we will file criminal charges," Lawyer Ed Escueta, counsel for Villaruel family, told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"*Sumusuko na siya, tinadtad pa rin ng bala* (He was already surrendering, but they still peppered him with bullets). He was wounded but still alive and yet the assault team still finished him off," Escueta said.

Villaruel and Catchillar were gunned down by a police assault team three hours after they took over the air control tower of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport to protest government corruption.

Quoting the autopsy report, Escueta said one of the fatal bullets that hit Villaruel was fired pointblank or from a distance of less than two feet.

"He was shot in the nape with the shooter standing too close, leaving behind traces of gunpowder in Villaruel's body," he said, stressing that based on the same laboratory report, "the two victims tested negative for powder burns when tested by the police."

No explosives

Escueta said no gun or explosive was recovered from the victims at the scene of the incident.

According to Escueta, he has been demanding the list of the members of the assault team but was always turned down. He said he would ask for a copy of the list from the Senate which is conducting its own investigation into the incident.

In Malacañang, a presidential security adviser yesterday claimed that Villaruel had met with members of Sen. Gregorio Honasan's faction of the Guardians "a week or less" before he seized the Naia control tower.

But Undersecretary Abraham Purugganan, presidential deputy adviser for special concerns and head of the Task Force for the security of critical infrastructures, said Villaruel "walked out" of the meeting for still unknown reasons.

Disagreement

"He walked out so it means they disagreed. We don't know what the disagreement (was all about)," Purugganan said in a phone interview when asked if the meeting meant that Villaruel's act was not an isolated incident but part of a destabilization plot against the Macapagal administration.

Purugganan said Villaruel's link with Honasan's faction of the Guardians could come up in the ongoing investigation of the Philippine National Police and the "security audit" of the airport tower by his interagency task force.

Purugganan said he expects the report of the team of security experts to be submitted within a week.

He also said the "audit team" is looking at the security lapses that allowed Villaruel's misadventure last weekend.

In Dagupan City, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday expressed her condolences to the family of Catchillar, saying she knew how painful it was for a family to lose a member.

"*Nakikiramay ako sa kanila at alam ko sa anumang pamilya, masakit ang mawalan ng kapatid, anak o asawa* (I condole with them and I know it is painful for any family to lose a brother, son or husband)," she said in an interview over dzWN.

Investigation

She said she hoped the Catchillar family would get over their loss "because anyway an investigation (of the incident) is being undertaken.".

"I hope they can understand what happened because the government is not angry with (Catchillar) but it is the duty of the government forces to defend vital installations of the government," the President said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Study says private sector cheating gov't of P127-B yearly

By Michael Lim Ubac

PRIVATE corporations, businessmen and professionals cheat the government of P127 billion in taxes annually, according to a five-year study conducted by the National Tax Research Center (NTRC).

"Corporations, businessmen and professionals have evaded paying P348 million in taxes a day over the past five years, an amount that could have built 29 kilometers of concrete road every day," said Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee.

The NTRC study, however, was limited to government revenues collected from income taxes and value added taxes (VAT) from 1998 to 2002, and did account for revenues lost to corrupt politicians and bureaucrats.

Recto said the estimated income tax gap from 1998 to 2002 averaged P85.4 billion annually. In the case of the value-added tax, the amount of unpaid VAT for the same five-year period averaged P41.6 billion annually.

Combining the income tax gap and unremitted VAT, "this brings to P127 billion the combined amount of VAT and income taxes which escaped the tax net every year from 1998 to 2002," said Recto.

Based on NTRC's computation, the country could have built 10,585 kilometers of road, or five times the length of the Aparri (in Cagayan) to General Santos City highway (in Cotabato) every year from the taxes corporations and businessmen should have paid annually, Recto said.

The NTRC study noted that ordinary workers were more honest taxpayers than millionaires, according to Recto, who revealed the results of the study released in September.

As to the VAT, about 30 percent of the potential VAT was not collected.

"We can interpret the data this way: Juan Obrero paid 93 centavos for every tax peso due from him while Joe Millionaire paid only 31 centavos. Tax evasion is indeed the favorite sport of the elite," Recto said.

Budget cuts to hit poor harder in '04

THE GOVERNMENT's plan to cut its spending on economic and social services in next year's budget would adversely affect President Macapagal-Arroyo's program to reduce poverty in the country, a congressional think-tank warned the other day.

According to a report prepared by the Congressional Planning and Budget Department, the share of social services in the national budget will shrink to 28.7 percent in 2004 from 33.2 percent in 1999, and the allocation for economic services will decline to 18 percent in 2004 from 20.2 percent this year.

CPBD director-general Rodolfo V. Vicerra blamed the cuts on the government's growing "mandatory expenditures," such as debt servicing, which accounts for roughly one-third of next year's budget. This is not going to help the fight against poverty at all, he said.

The CPBD questioned the government's optimistic growth and tax collection forecasts next year, saying these could blow up the budget deficit beyond the targeted P198 billion in 2004.

The think-tank expects economic growth, measured against gross domestic product next year, to hit 4.2 percent, significantly below the government's low-end forecast of 4.9 percent. At the same time, the CPBD said, slower economic growth, higher interest rates and the weak peso should lead to an additional budget shortfall of P4.35 billion. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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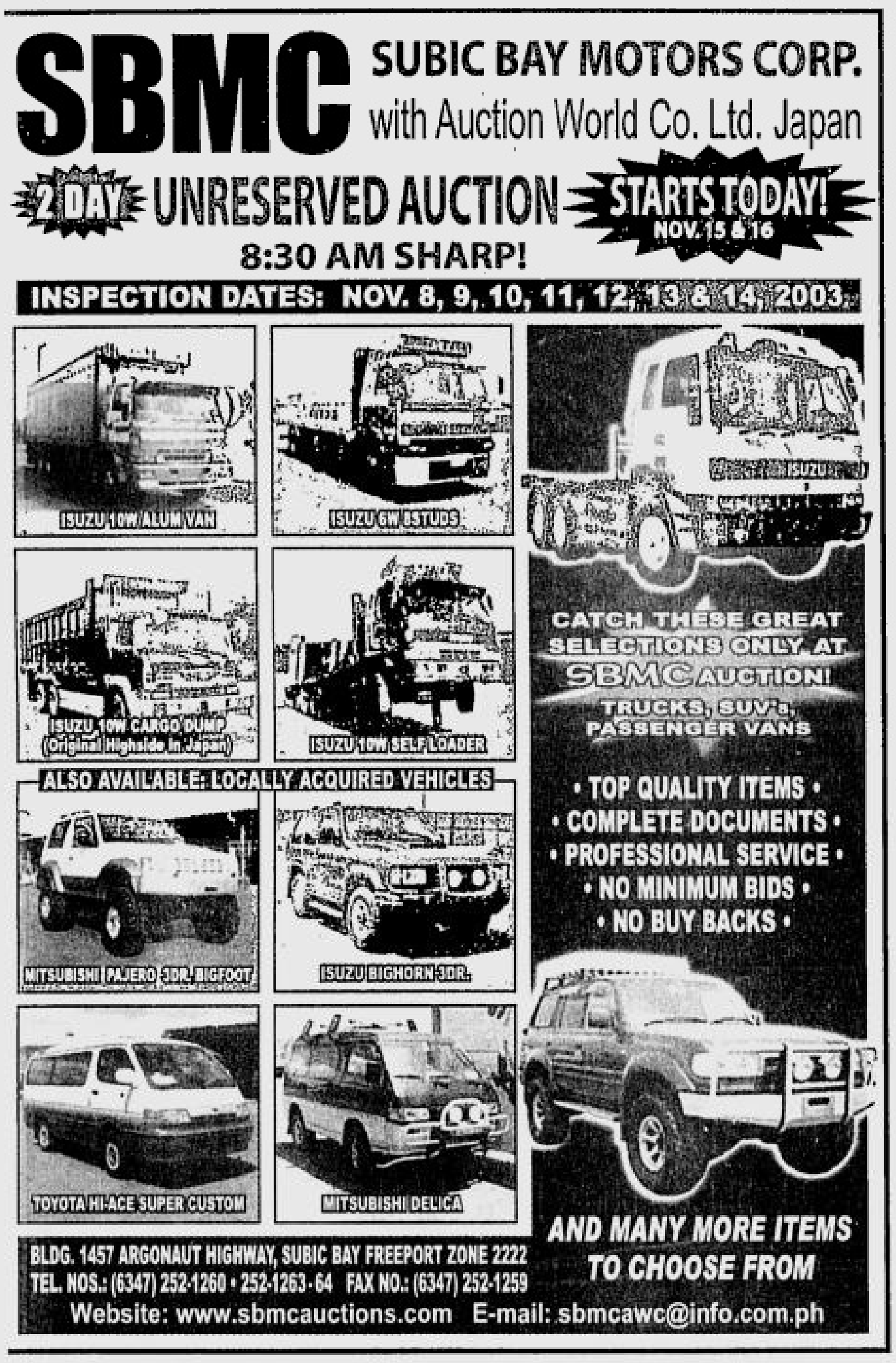
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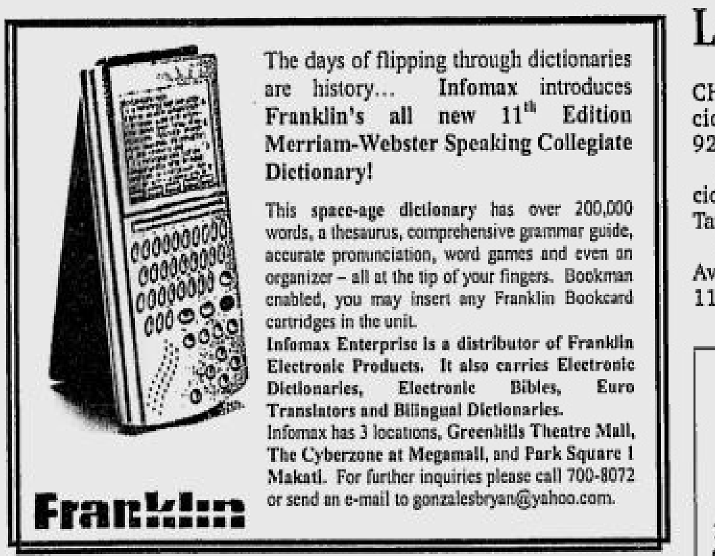
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Lucio Tan's ma dies

CHUA KING Ha, the mother of taipan Lucio Tan, died on Wednesday at the age of 92.

She is survived by her children Lucio, Cencio, Mariano, Harry, Shirley Tan Chua, Sally Tan Cheung and Frank Chan.

Her remains lie at Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City. Interment is on Nov. 18 at 11 a.m. at the Chinese Cemetery.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, November 15, 2003
32nd Week in Ordinary Time
1st Reading: Wis 18:14-16; 19:6-9
Gospel: Lk 18:1-8

Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should pray continually and not lose heart. He said, "In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor people. In the same town was a widow who kept coming to him, saying: 'Defend my rights against my opponent.' For a time he refused, but finally he thought: 'Even though I neither fear God nor care about people, this widow bothers me so much I will see that she gets justice; then she will stop coming and wearing me out.'"

And Jesus explained, "Listen to what the evil judge says. Will God not do justice for his chosen ones who cry to him day and night even if he delays in answering them? I tell you, he will speedily do them justice. Yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

Commentary

"In the same town was a widow who kept coming to him, saying: 'Defend my rights against my opponent.'" Calvin Coolidge wrote this beautiful poem on persistence:

Nothing in the world
Can take the place of persistence.
Talent will not:
Nothing is more common than
Unsuccessful men with talent.
Genius will not:
Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.
Education will not:
The world is full of educated derelicts.
Persistence and determination
Alone are omnipotent.
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Court gives Imelda 15 days to explain

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has given former first lady Imelda R. Marcos 15 days to explain why she should not be arrested for violating conditions of her bail when she stayed abroad beyond the 30 days allowed her by the anti-graft court.

The Sandiganbayan had granted Marcos one month, from Sept. 26 to Oct. 26, to travel to the US and Europe but it was only on Nov. 13 that she returned to the court to present her passport and sign clearances as stipulated in her permit to travel.

The former first lady is facing 11 graft cases before the court which asked her to "explain in writing within 15 days from notice why… this court should not order the forfeiture of her bail and travel bonds and cause the immediate issuance of a bench warrant for her arrest."

Marcos' lawyer Robert Sison filed a motion with the Sandiganbayan to extend her trip, but government prosecutors asked that her bail bond be recalled and that she be cited for contempt and jailed for violating conditions of her trip. *Armand N. Nocum*

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CRIMINAL LAW	: Justice Edilberto Sandoval : Justice Rodolfo Palattao : Judge Pedro Laggui : Judge Ma. Cristina Cornejo : Dean Carlos Ortega : Fiscal Danilo Formoso
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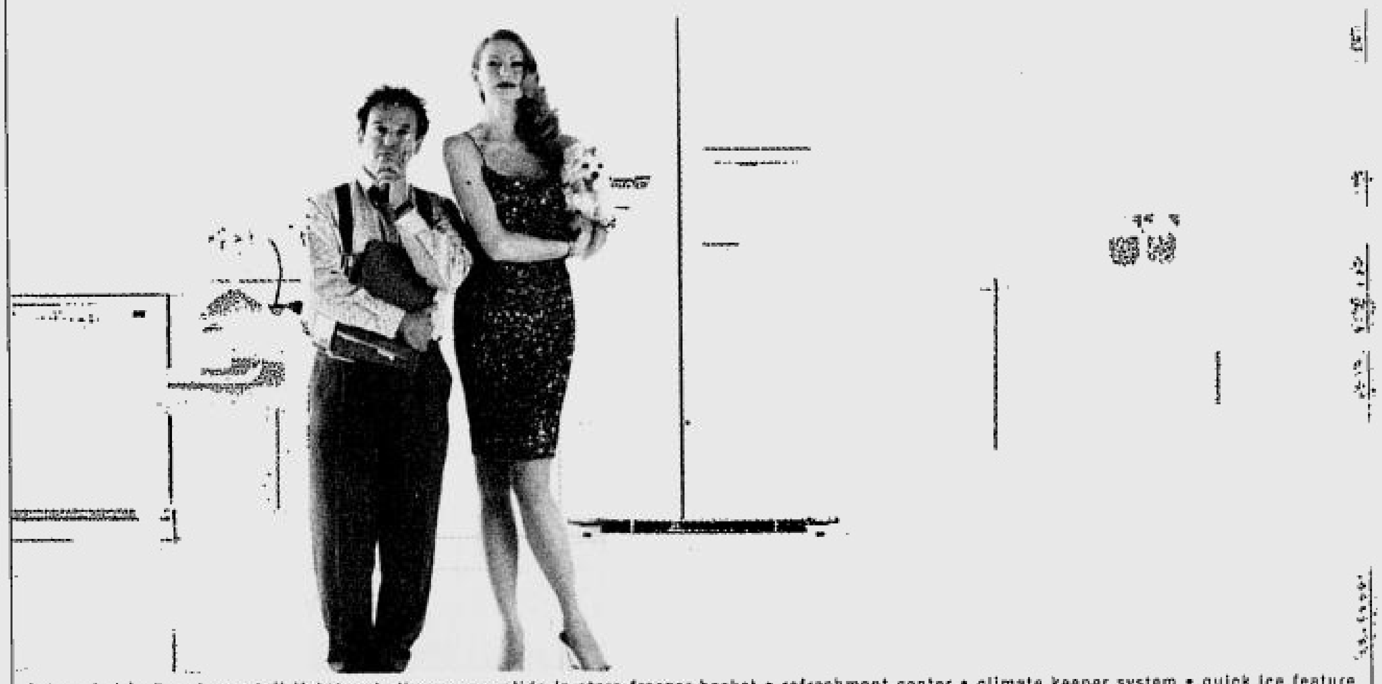

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WHAT'S the buzz? President Macapagal appears to be listening intently to Angono Mayor Jerry Calderon during the oathtaking on Friday of Lakas officials in the Rizal town. VAL HANDUMON

ERIK ARAZAS

SEN. PANFILO LACSON appeals to President Macapagal to respect the rule of law during the launching of the Lawyers Assembly for a Clean, Stable, Orderly Nation at the Pan Pacific Hotel on Roxas Blvd.

Kuratong Baleleng cops appeal: Stop endless persecution

From page A1

summary execution case, was a guest at the launch.

On Wednesday, Quezon City Judge Teresita Yadao dismissed the case against Lacson and his 33 co-accused on the ground that there was insufficient evidence that the 11 Kuratong Baleleng gang members had been summarily executed.

Rule of law

Lacson and the 33 accused policemen claimed the bank robbery gang had died in a shoot-out.

"The rule of law has spoken. We expect nothing less from the government but to respect and uphold the rule of law," said Chief Supt. Francisco Zubia, reading from a statement.

Col. Gil Meneses said they had all "suffered a lot" in the past eight years and urged government to "allow us [to] lead normal lives as husbands to our wives, fathers to our children, and police officers and public servants."

At the press conference, Zubia and Lacson claimed that the Kuratong rub-out case was revived by the authorities solely to persecute Lacson and throw him in jail.

"We have been dragged into controversy for so long now and we ardently hope that with this decision of Judge Yadao, we will be finally spared from this relentless political harassment," said Zubia.

Disbarment

Lacson accused the government of harassing Yadao, citing the threat of state prosecutors to have her disbarred for committing "grave abuse of discretion."

The senator, who is a declared candidate for president in 2004, said he believes President Macapagal-Arroyo was aware of the state prosecutors' disbarment move against Yadao.

"The President said she will respect the decision but do we see any respect from [Chief Prosecutor Jovencito] Zuño and company for they are now even moving for the disbarment of a judge who just rendered a decision not to their own liking. Is that respect for the decision or the rule of law?" he asked.

Lacson claimed to be the target of government persecution and that the 33 police officers had been innocently dragged into the issue.

Name names

In a related development, a lawyers' group yesterday asked Yadao to name the people who allegedly pressured her to issue arrest warrants against Lacson and the 33 accused in the Kuratong Baleleng case.

In a letter to Yadao, the Equal Justice for All Movement (E-Just) said Yadao should disclose the identity of the people allegedly pressuring her as failure to do so would give the "impression that you tolerate such crimes and could put the whole judicial system under a cloud of doubt."

Gov't pressure

Yadao said on Tuesday that the Macapagal-Arroyo administration had put pressure on her to issue the warrants. She said she was even offered a seat in the Court of Appeals.

She however did not name the administration officials who approached her.

E-Just spokesperson Leonard de Vera said the judge should name names because two crimes were involved: direct bribery under Article 210 of the Revised Penal Code and obstruction of justice.

Support with evidence

If Yadao refuses to reveal the names of the people who illegally tried to pressure and influence her decision, the E-Just would go to the Supreme Court to compel her to do so "in the interest of justice."

"Should your charges be supported by convincing evidence, the perpetrators should be prosecuted. On the other hand, if you fail to perform this duty, your accusation will be regarded with doubt and apprehension," De Vera told Yadao.

'Floating'

Zubia disclosed to reporters that he and the other accused officers still in active service had been in "floating status" since the Kuratong Baleleng case first surfaced. For the past eight years, they had been reporting for administrative duties, he said.

He said the Philippine National Police was treating them differently, citing how they are made to sign a separate log book when reporting for work.

Appeal

Zubia said he himself was retiring from the service in May 2004. But he said he was appealing to the PNP to let the younger police officers return to their normal duties.

The other police officers who attended the news conference were SPO1 Osmundo Carino, SPO4 Wily Nuas, SPO4 Cicero Bacolod, SPO4 Virgilio Paragas, SPO2 Roberto agbalog, Chief Insp. Ceasar Tanagan, SPO4 Antonio Frias, PO3 Rolando Lalagas and PO3 Gerry Liwanag.

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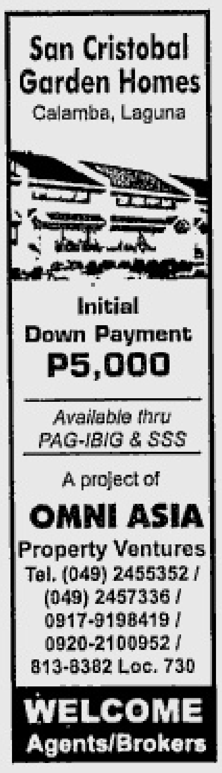
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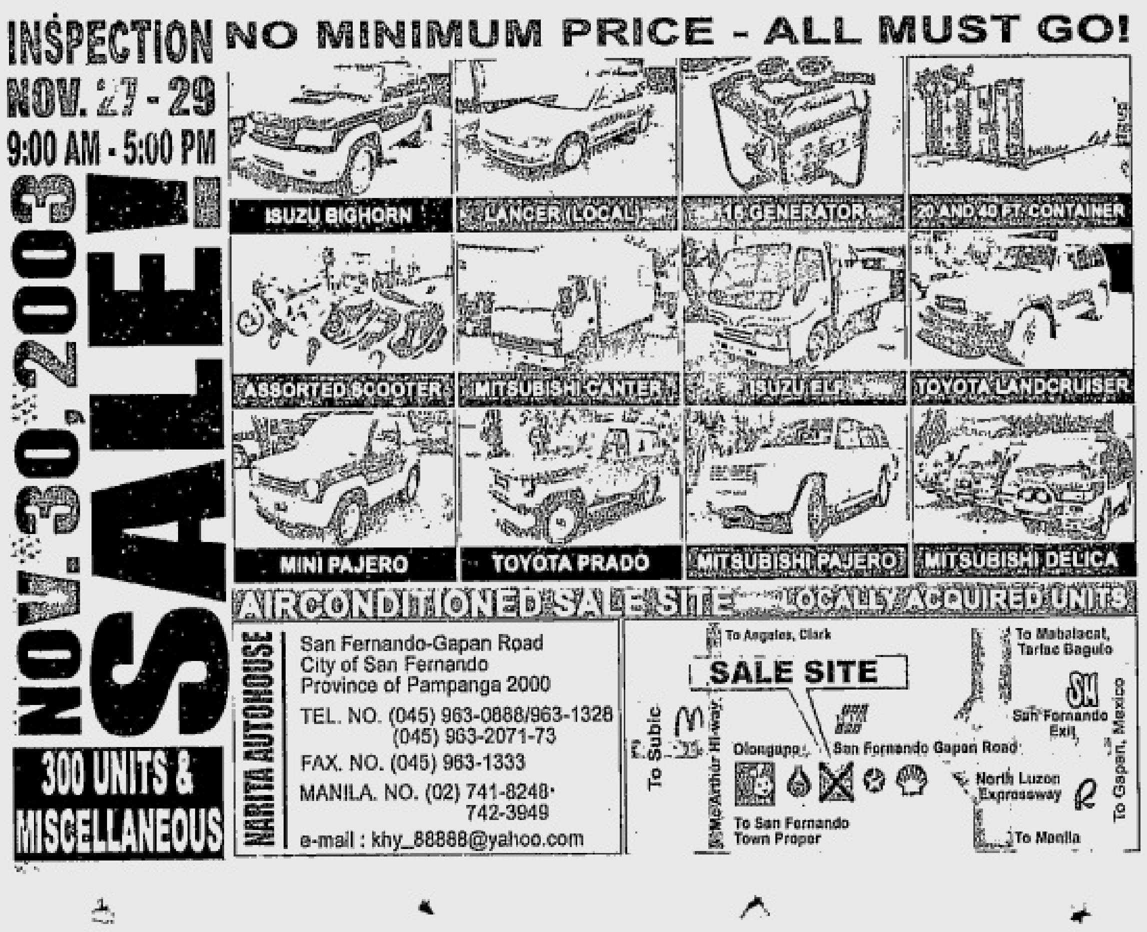
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Family of 7 butchered in Zamboanga del Norte

From page A1

death in what Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division, described as a "very gruesome" killing.

Salazar said the seven victims were probably killed on Wednesday evening.

Motive unknown

The military initially blamed "lawless elements" but later said rebels belonging to the separatist MILF were responsible.

The motive for the attack was not known. MILF leaders could not be reached for comment.

Maj. Roberto Rabasio, the 1st ID spokesperson, said the bodies were only discovered early Thursday morning when villagers noticed an unpleasant smell coming from the Balios house in Sitio Marangan. Houses in the remote village are far apart, the military said.

Salazar said that soldiers pursuing the assailants caught up with them in Daniel Maeng village on Thursday and killed one rebel and captured another.

Machetes

Soldiers seized bloodstained machetes believed to have been used in butchering the Balios family from the slain and captured suspects.

Salazar said the slain rebel was Dandong Yusop of the MILF's 3rd unit command.

Paam Laidan, the captured suspect, told the soldiers that he and his group had killed the Balios family.

Rabasio said the military believes the perpetrators of what they now call the second Kalawit massacre was probably also the same group which carried out the attack on the town on Feb. 19.

Torched houses

Armed men believed to be MILF rebels had rounded up some villagers in Tubod and shot them, killing 14, including an infant and a 7-year-old boy, and injuring 10 people.

Mayor Arnold Carloto said the attackers set fire to several houses before fleeing.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, who then headed the Southern Command, said some of the victims had died from the fire.

The MILF has denied responsibility for the February attack.*Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

WASTING AWAY
Easter Island's mysterious "Moai," giant head statues carved out of volcanic rock, are in danger of being destroyed by years of tropical rains and wind as well as careless humans and farm animals. Experts have called on the international community to commit funds to preserve the monoliths, whose mystery draws tourists to the world's most remote inhabited island 4,000 km west of Santiago, Chile. REUTERS

US deaths in Iraq exceed toll in first 3 years in Vietnam

PHILADELPHIA—The US death toll in Iraq has surpassed the number of American soldiers killed during the first three years of the Vietnam War, the brutal Cold War conflict that cast a shadow over US affairs for more than a generation.

A Reuters analysis of US defense department statistics showed on Thursday that the Vietnam War, which the Army says officially began on Dec. 11, 1961, produced a combined 392 fatal casualties from 1962 through 1964, when American troop levels in Indochina stood at just over 17,000.

By comparison, a roadside bomb attack that killed a soldier in Baghdad on Wednesday brought to 397 the tally of American dead in Iraq, where US forces number about 130,000 troops—the same number reached in Vietnam by October 1965.

The casualty count for Iraq apparently surpassed the Vietnam figure last Sunday, when a US soldier killed in a rocket-propelled grenade attack south of Baghdad became the conflict's 393rd American casualty since Operation Iraqi Freedom began on March 20.

Larger still is the number of American casualties from the broader US war on terrorism, which has produced 488 military deaths in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Southwest Asia and other locations.

Statistics from battle zones outside Iraq show that 91 soldiers have died since Oct. 7, 2001, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, which US President George W. Bush launched against Afghanistan's former Taliban regime after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington killed 3,000 people.

The Bush administration has rejected comparisons between Iraq and Vietnam, which traumatized Americans a generation ago with a sad procession of military body bags and television footage of grim wartime cruelty.

Recent opinion polls show public support for the president eroding as he heads toward the 2004 election, partly because of public concern over the deadly cycle of guerrilla attacks and suicide bombings in Iraq.

On Thursday, heavy gunfire and explosions echoed across Baghdad as US troops pounded rebel positions for a second night, and administration officials sought ways to accelerate a transfer of power to the Iraqi people.

Because US involvement in Vietnam increased gradually after the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, there is little consensus on when the war in Southeast Asia began.

Some date the war to the late 1950s. Others say it began on Aug. 5, 1964, when Lyndon Johnson announced air strikes against North Vietnam in retaliation for a reported torpedo attack on a US destroyer in the Gulf of Tonkin.

However, the Army's start date for the Vietnam War has been set by its Center of Military History as Dec. 11, 1961, when two helicopter companies consisting of 32 aircraft and 400 soldiers arrived in the country, an Army public affairs specialist said. *Reuters*

5,000 Saddam loyalists fighting coalition in Iraq, says US general

GIOVANNI Cavallero, one of the 18 Italians killed in a suicide truck bombing attack at the MSU base in Nasiriyah, Iraq, Nov. 12, on his wedding day with his wife Sabrina. AP

TAMPA, Florida—About 5,000 "dangerous" loyalists of ousted dictator Saddam Hussein are fighting the US-led occupation in Iraq but they can be overcome, the general in charge of US forces insisted Thursday.

Gen. John Abizaid, head of the Central Command, which runs operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, said the Saddam loyalists are well-armed, well-financed and have "a brutal and determined" leadership.

He told a press conference at the command headquarters in Tampa: "The clear and most dangerous enemy to us at the present time are the former regime loyalists."

Abizaid said followers of the former ruling Baathist party operate mainly around Baghdad and the northern cities of Fallujah, Tikrit, Mosul and Kirkuk. Their main weapons are "improvised explosive devices," mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and sometimes small arms.

The general went on: "I would say that the force of people actively armed and operating against us does not exceed 5,000.

"Now, people will say, 'Well, that's a very small number.' But when you understand that they're organized in cellular structure, that they have a brutal and determined cadre, that they know how to operate covertly, they have access to a lot of money and a lot of ammunition, you'll understand how dangerous they are."

The Baathists "by far represent the greatest threat to peace and stability, and it is very important for us to close with that enemy, to discover their cellular structure, to unravel it and to remove that threat" to the country's emerging government.

"Clearly we must attack and destroy the enemy where we find them. And on the other hand, we have to be very, very mindful that the vast majority of the Iraqi population is thankful to have coalition forces there."

Abizaid said there are currently about 130,000 US troops in Iraq, in addition to 25,000 from Britain and other countries.

And he expressed confidence that the Saddam loyalists would be beaten.

"There is no military threat in Iraq that can drive us out. We have the best equipped, best trained army in the world in position in the toughest areas that we have to deal with. The troops are confident. They're tough. They're capable."

The coalition is seeking to quickly train an Iraqi security force to boost US hopes of a speedy withdrawal from the country it invaded on March 20, bringing down Saddam less than a month later. *AFP*

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A message from
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Norway halts mediation in S. Lanka

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Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen called the feud a serious threat to the peace process, but added the government and Tamil Tiger rebels had assured him they were committed to the ceasefire now holding in the 20-year war.

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"There is no change to SLMM activities. We are here to monitor the implementation of the ceasefire," said spokesperson Agnes Bragadottir, adding that there were no reports of unrest or truce violations in the north and east since the crisis began.

Norway's move comes a day after the reclusive leader of the Tamil Tigers also said the power struggle made it impossible to sit down and talk peace, but Velupillai Prabhakaran added that he had no plan to return to war.

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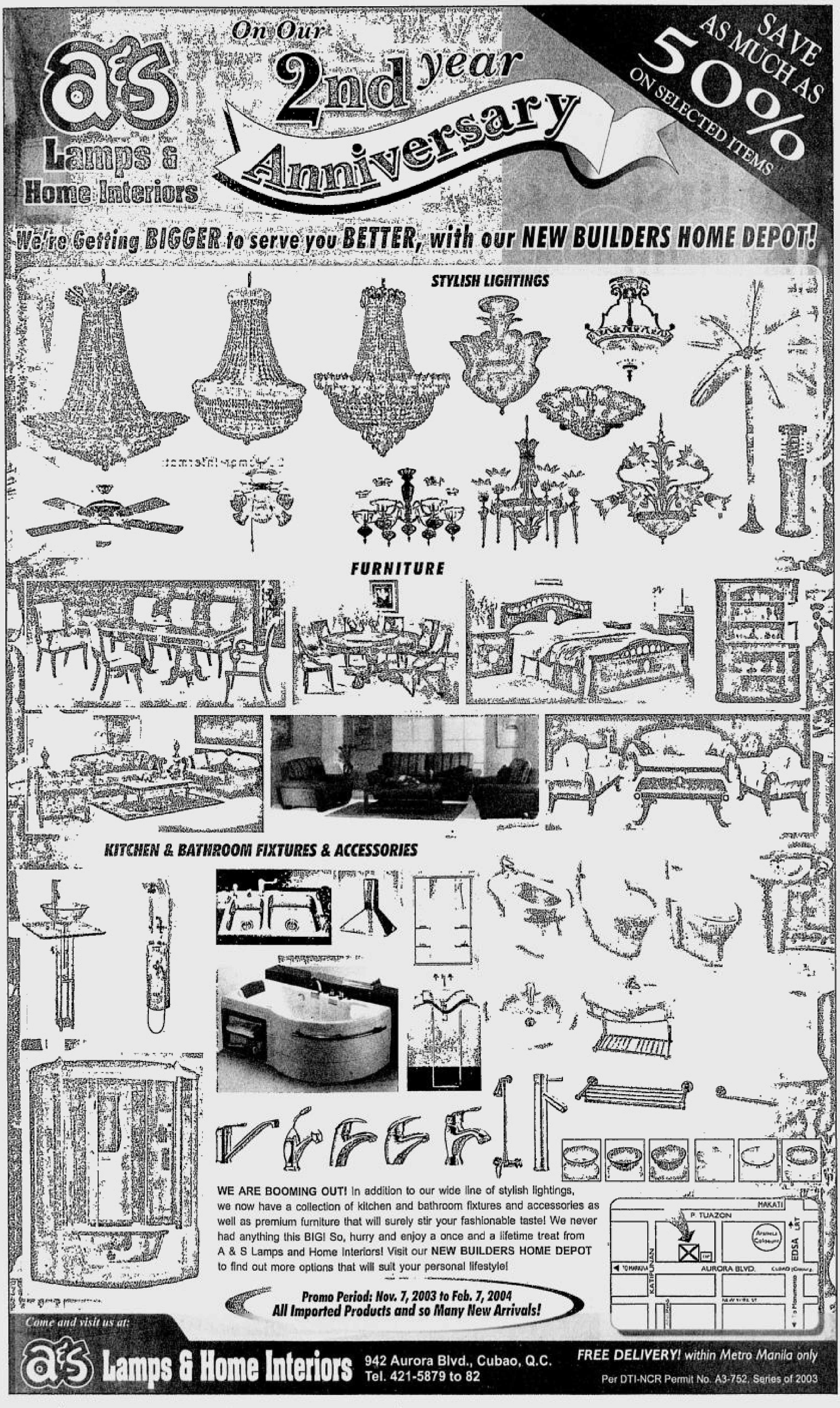

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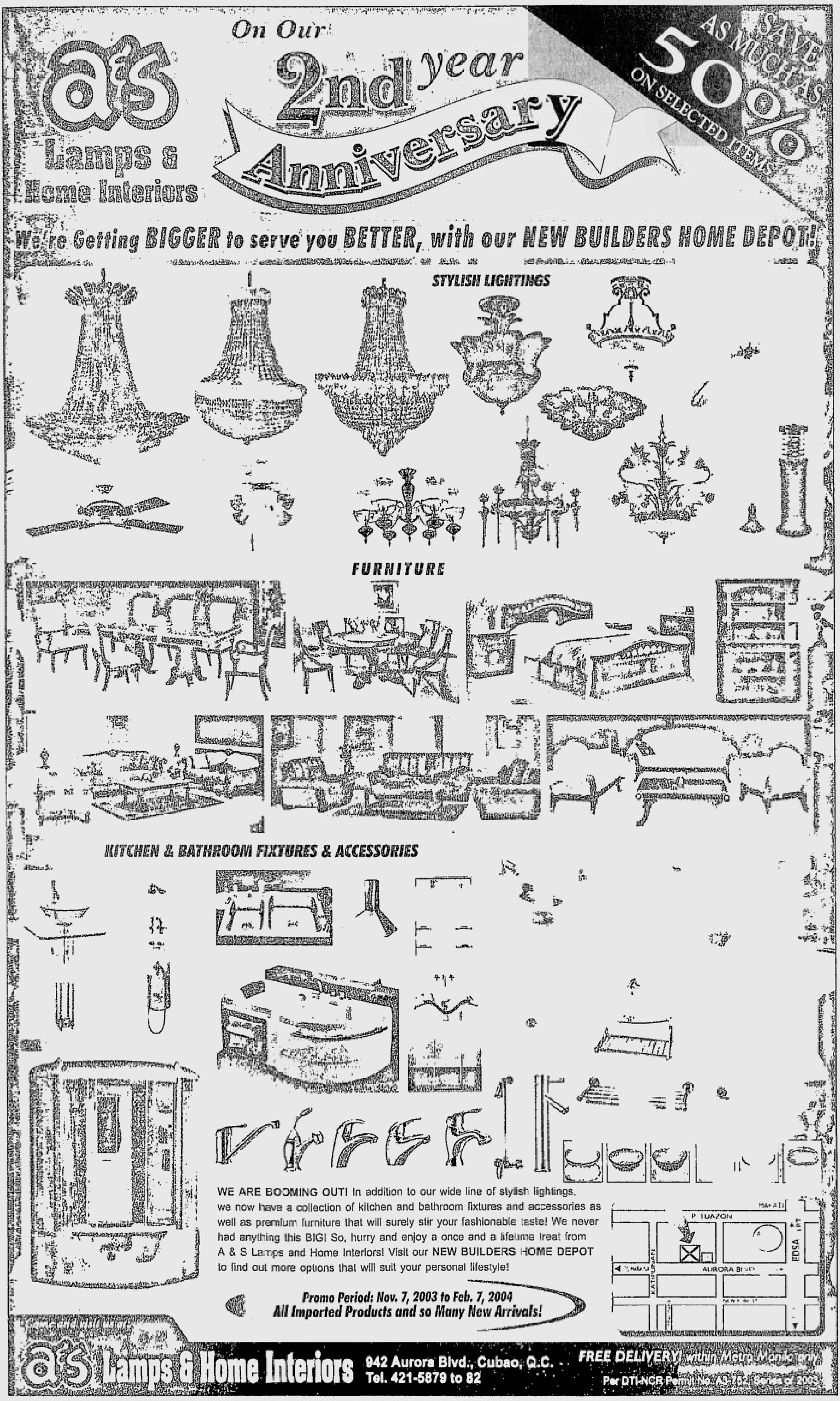

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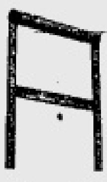
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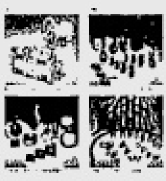
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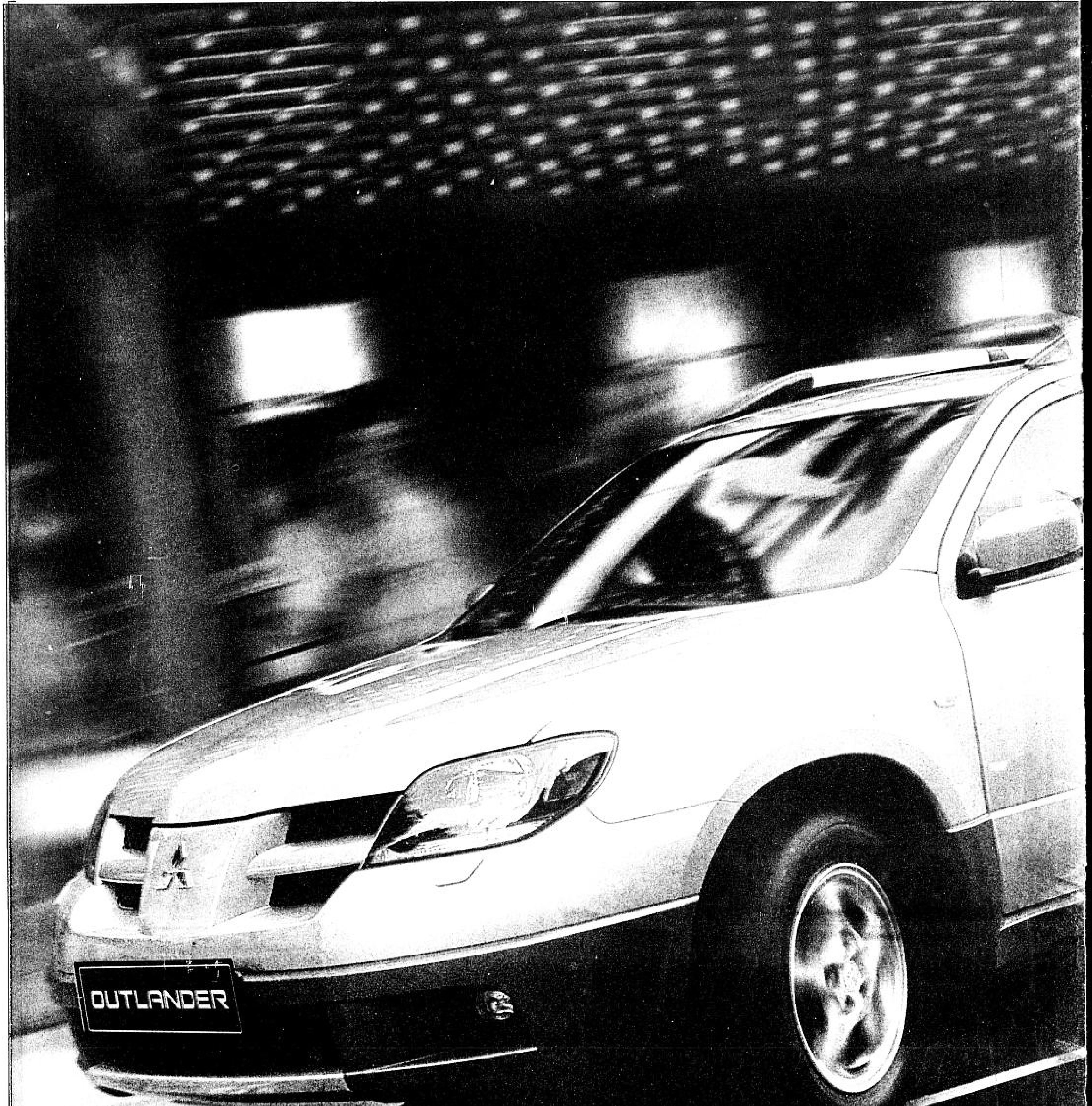

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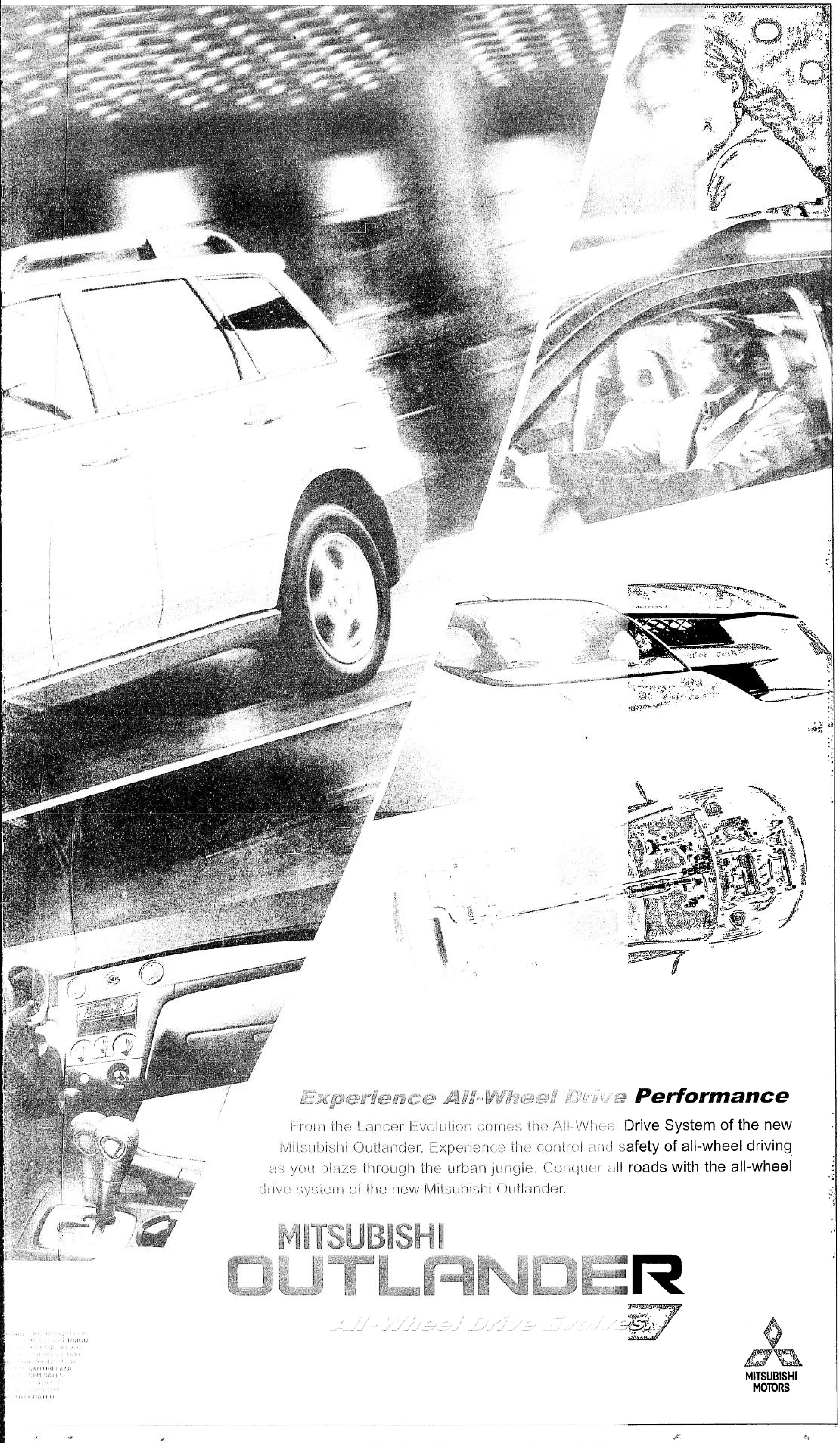

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OPINION

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Hot air

EDITORIAL

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's call for a "total reconciliation" with opponents across the entire political spectrum crashed even before it could take off. It nose-dived not because it had substance but because it was propelled by hot air. As soon as the call was broadcast, it triggered a tempest of rejections. The President's political adversaries had never been as solid as when they spurned it, even though they had different reasons for doing so.

The call was not well thought out. It was made immediately after the impasse over the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. was broken, giving the administration a breathing spell from the wearying tensions fueled by the stand-off. The President seemed to have been overcome by the euphoria generated by the fact that the resolution of the conflict—no thanks to her but thanks mainly to the courage of the Supreme Court in asserting its constitutional duty—halted the dangerous slide toward political anarchy. The resolution merely bought time for her, it did not put her in a position of strength to buy peace with her opponents through an empty initiative.

She offered the olive branch to a wide range of adversaries who have been putting her administration under siege. The targets of this new policy of attraction found out quickly that there was no basis for reconciliation.

On the same day that the call was issued, a note of defiance erupted from Makati, where government security forces and mobs identified with deposed President Joseph Estrada, clashed. The objects of the initiative—including Estrada, Eduardo M. Cojuangco, the Marcoses, the New People's Army guerrillas, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Abu Sayyaf and the coup plotters and even the legal opposition—did not find a single straw to clutch for a dialogue on reconciliation.

The President's call was so ambiguous—it did not spell out the basis for reconciliation, with any of these groups—that it thoroughly deserved the resounding rebuff. Estrada, for example, demanded in effect that the President surrender her claim to the presidency. The Marcoses had their own demand: they wanted the dismantling of all the apparatus of government, including the Presidential Commission on Good Government that has been pressing for the recovery of the Marcos loot.

After her extended shopping expedition overseas, Imelda Marcos has less incentive to reconcile with the President, since reconciliation (under Imelda's terms) means junking all the criminal and civil cases over their ill-gotten wealth, and giving the Marcos family a clearance to spend their loot without sharing any part of it with the Filipino people.

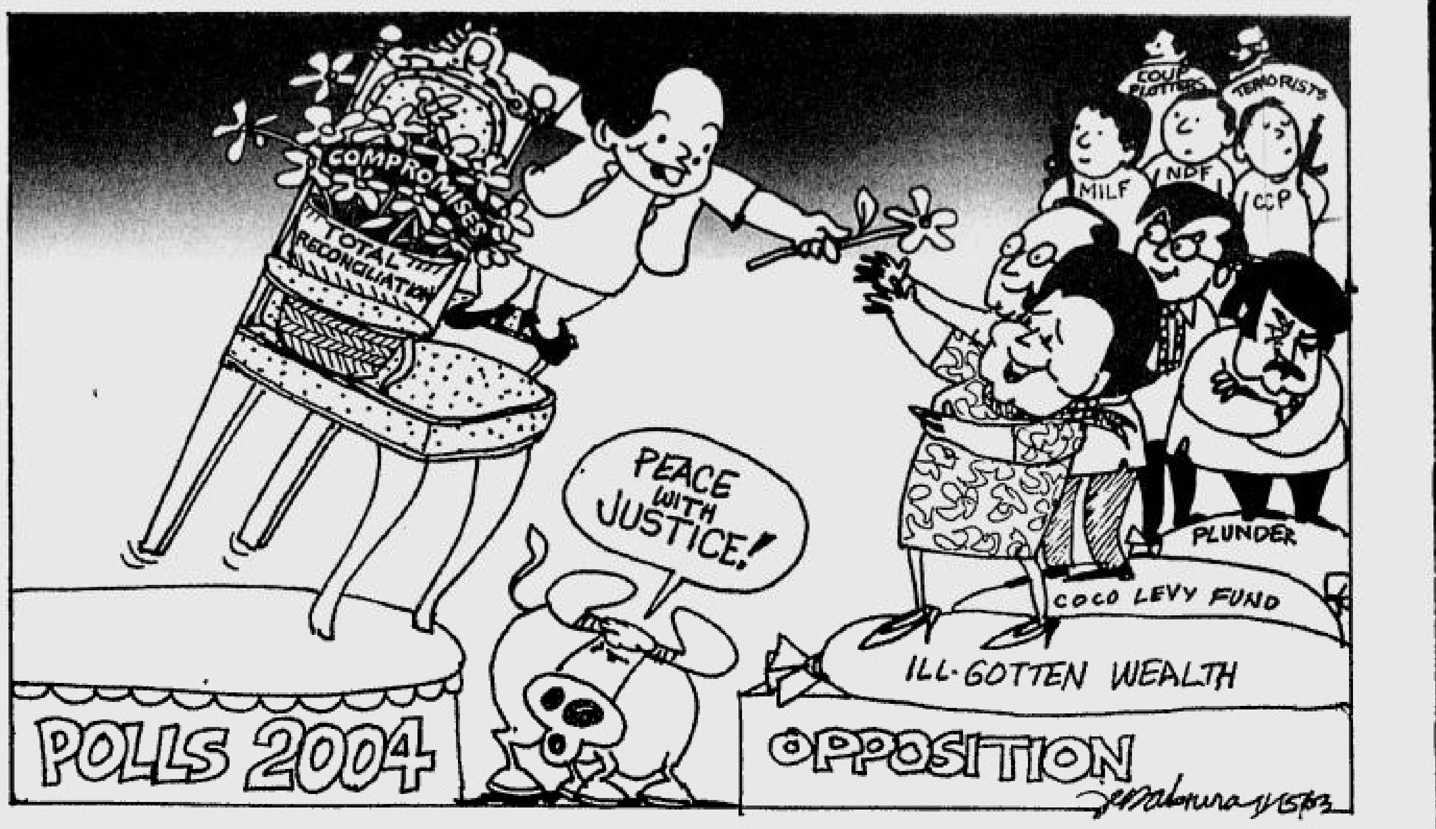
In the case of Cojuangco, there is as much—or as little—basis for a reconciliation with him as there is with Estrada and the Marcoses. Cojuangco, through his cohorts in the Nationalist People's Coalition in Congress, nearly succeeded in hijacking its alliance with Lakas, in his offensive against the Supreme Court.

Each of these groups has separate demands, all of them impossible to meet unless Ms Macapagal wants to give up the presidency to them.

The point of all these contradictions is that the presidency is so beleaguered by the demands and claims for the satisfaction of the interests of these lobby groups, that it is virtually being held captive by them. From the range of issues that divide the President and these groups, there is absolutely no basis for a negotiated reconciliation. What these groups are in effect demanding is the unconditional surrender of the President, while what she is seeking is no more than a truce from the relentless guerrilla attacks on her administration.

Her tormentors perceive this offer of reconciliation as a sign of weakness after her administration was severely wounded by the conflict over the Davide impeachment. This is the reason why the call provoked them into putting out impossible demands.

Talk about a "strong republic." What we see instead are only strong warlords. Talk of reconciliation will be an empty dialogue between implacable foes.



Adoring aliens

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

WHILE the nation teetered on the brink of a constitutional crisis over the impeachment case, President Macapagal-Arroyo took time off from her serious duties to extend an official welcome to the star of a Chinese TV show that had fascinated the *bakya* crowd, some prominent members of her Cabinet and other tasteless people.

As the INQUIRER reported the other Friday, "Work stopped in Malacañang for nearly three hours yesterday as Cabinet officials and Palace employees and their children plus orphans, cancer victims, journalists and other star-struck fans turned up to give Jerry Yan, star of the popular chinovela 'Meteor Garden,' a welcome that was rather unprecedented. No, try 'frenzied.'" By-liner Juliet Labog-Javellana couldn't have put it better.

"Pandemonium broke loose in the hallowed Malacañang Ceremonial Hall," she continued, when the Chinese star appeared from the music room after his courtesy call on the President. Speaker Jose de Venecia's wife gushed as she waited with Ricky Reyes, the hairdresser, to personally greet the actor. "I like his dimples," she said of the actor, who was obviously overwhelmed by the unruly welcome of his fans. Notably, these included even the usually serious-minded Secretary Ignacio Bunye, whose camera clicked furiously.

The commotion caused by the crowd of admirers became uncontrollable, causing the actor to seek refuge in the state dining hall with La Gloria, who must have been displeased over being upstaged by the young foreigner. The fans wanted his autograph, not hers, to pose with him, not her. She got little attention from even the more mature people who were jostling with the younger fans to shake the hands of the Chinese actor.

This tomfoolery happened (just to stress the point) in Malacañang, the Palace of the people and the official residence of the President of the Philippines. The orgy of adoration by teenagers and adults alike was not for a deserving citizen or a distinguished foreigner but for a young television star of a what is now locally known as a *chinovela*. It would have been understandable if it had happened in the premises of ABS-CBN as sponsors of "Meteor Garden." With no less than our chief executive as unofficial barker, the Republic became an unwitting promoter of the so-so show.

What's with the Filipino people? Why are we so enamored of foreign actors as if they were habitués of some exclusive planet with distinctive attractions denied ordinary mortals like us?

Our ludicrous regard for Hollywood stars has become practically a way of life with many of us. Except for the level-headed, everybody wanted to look like Marilyn Monroe or John Wayne, to be replaced now by Nicole Kidman and Brad Pitt. There was much excitement when Elizabeth Taylor came for a visit and Naomi Campbell, another guest, was annoyed by the way her imitators fawned upon her.

And do you remember the phenomenon of Thalia, the beautiful actress from Mexico who captivated the television audience some years ago? She had a stunning face and figure like many of her colleagues in the foreign entertainment world, and many of her Filipino admirers embraced her vicariously as another temptress from the Caucasian race.

But now we have Yan, an Oriental like us, who is mesmerizing many of our people as if he were also from an unattainable realm where only beautiful people from the Americas and Europe dwell in splendor. They are there to enthrall with their distant charms the gaping hewers of wood and drawers of water from the primitive continent of Asia.

What must have possessed Ms Macapagal, with all the serious problems whirling around her, to receive the Chinese non-entity in Malacañang? Many of our people from various groups and places in our country are anxious to discuss their problems with the President and ask for her assistance in solving them. But the doors of the Palace have not opened for them as they graciously did for the tousled alien guest.

Our people have more claim to her personal attention than a foreign entertainer whose only accomplishment is to exploit the vulgar tastes of the *bakya* crowd. By making a big production of Yan's courtesy call on her, President Macapagal was probably hoping that some of the lad's appeal would brush off on her and make her more acceptable to the unthinking fans who regard our tinsel entertainers as the saviors of the nation.

It's bad enough that television clowns like Tito Sotto and basketball roughnecks like Robert Jaworski have been allowed to debase the Senate, and Fernando Poe Jr., Da King of Philippine Movies, threatens to invade Malacañang with his make-believe machismo and not much else. At least they are Filipinos to whom we may offer our affection erroneously, even slavishly. It's not so bad to be beguiled by our own countrymen as to be mindlessly enchanted by vacuous foreigners.

The exaggerated welcome extended by Malacañang to Jerry Yan betrays once again our often gawking adoration of the alien. Instead of giving the Chinese actor her cloying reception, President Macapagal should have exhibited a more judicious sense of values befitting the national pride and deportment of the self-respecting Filipino.

How fair and impartial is Yadao?

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

THE SPEED with which Judge Maria Theresa de la Torre Yadao disposed of the Kuratong Baleleng case was breathtaking. Under ordinary circumstances she should be congratulated for it—justice delayed being justice denied, and all that. Except that there is now a question of whether what she dispensed was justice, or whether it constituted "grave abuse of discretion amounting to excess or lack of jurisdiction."

My lawyer friends tell me that dismissing a case for lack of probable cause, as Yadao has done is a "rare," and "exceptional" occurrence. Another lawyer obliges: probable cause for the issuance of a warrant of arrest has been defined as "such facts and circumstances which would lead a reasonably discreet and prudent man to believe that an offense has been committed by the person sought to be arrested." Still another explains that showing probable cause requires the "lowest quantum of evidence," and that the general rule that judges apply in these cases is that when there is a doubt as to who is telling the truth, a trial is the way to go.

Which must mean that Yadao thought that the evidence presented by the prosecutors either was less than the already small amount required, or that there is no doubt in her mind as to who was telling the truth, so there was no point in trying the case. It is not only the speed of her decision that was breathtaking, but the quality of her reasoning as well.

Yadao's dismissal of the case—refusing to issue a warrant of arrest against Sen. Panfilo Lacson and his men for lack of probable cause—must also mean that she thought that the reasoning which led three Senate committees, one of which was chaired by then Sen. Raul Roco, was seriously flawed, because they had recommended that murder or homicide charges be filed against Lacson, et al.

Eleven persons were killed while in the custody of Lacson and his men. Cuff and abrasion marks showed they were tied or handcuffed. No powder burns on them. All shots fired into the van they were in, none fired out. And no crime was committed? It was a shootout rather than a rubout? Lacson et al. had nothing whatsoever to do with it, even if it was a shootout? Was that what Yadao concluded with that dismissal?

Fairness and impartiality or grave abuse of discretion? That still has to be decided.

What I would like to do, though, is compare Judge Yadao's behavior in this case with how she has behaved in the Valerio case, which is still in her sala. There is one thing in common between the Valerio and Lacson cases, other than that they both involve heinous crimes. And that is Sigfried Fortun, of Estrada impeachment fame. Fortun was, and maybe still is, a private prosecutor in the Valerio case, and he is also a defense lawyer in the Lacson case. But there are differences as well.

I have never met Judge Yadao. But I had a personal experience with her in the Valerio case. Mila Valerio, a guidance counselor at the University of the Philippines, with a Ph.D. in Education, is accused, together with her supposed policeman-lover, of the murder, on March 18, 2000, of her husband Jun. The latter was the government corporate counsel, which was why the case was widely publicized.

I got interested in the cases because I thought that Mila, whom I had not met at the time, was getting a raw deal. Reading the pertinent documents convinced me that this was indeed so, and I took up her cause.

That's when I ran afoul of Judge Yadao. She took offense at my column of Sept. 22, 2001, where I complained about the delays in the granting of bail to Mila. She complained (in a letter sent to and published by the INQUIRER on Oct. 2, 2001) that I had "insinuated that it is the court which is causing the delay" and that I "would like the public to believe that Valerio is innocent."

I admit to both. But she also accused me of not doing my homework : "If Monsod had only looked at the records..." And that charge I emphatically deny.

One difference between the Valerio and Lacson cases is that in the former, there was no open hearing to determine probable cause. The judge at the time (not Yadao), following convention, accepted the recommendation of the prosecutor in the preliminary investigation, that there was probable cause, and issued a warrant of arrest. In the Lacson case, Yadao conducted open hearings, which in itself is supposed to be exceptional.

Another notable difference is that it took almost one year (from March 8, 2001 to Feb. 26, 2002) and nine full-blown, two-and-one-half-hour hearings, before she finally granted bail to Mila. In her letter to this newspaper, she stated that the prosecution must be allowed "to present all the evidence it may want to produce," during bail hearings. Never mind that this doesn't make sense, because it might allow the prosecution to control the timing of the bail decision.

But one cannot help but ask: Were the exhaustive hearings in the Valerio application for bail an accommodation to the private prosecutor, just as the abbreviated hearing in dismissing the Lacson case was a bending over backward for the defense counsel?

I said at the time that due process for the prosecution should never outweigh the right to due process of the accused—but now, the shoe may be on the other foot, with due process being denied the prosecution (People of the Philippines) in the Lacson case.

The third difference is that Mila languished in jail for two and a half years.

Judge Yadao asserted in her letter that she was fair and impartial. Do you agree?

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Congress left court employees out

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN THE POST mortem, the popular theory is that the Nationalist People's Coalition launched the impeachment move against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., five days after the successful visit to Manila of US President Bush, to further the agenda of its founder, industrialist Eduardo Cojuangco. It's popularly believed even by taxi and jeepney drivers that the grand design of the anti-Davide group was to remove him from the Supreme Court, owing to several decisions that this pro-active court had made and could promulgate affecting the vast economic interests of Cojuangco. A *casus belli* had to be found to justify impeachment and this came in the form of complaints from lowly court employees about their failure to receive additional allowances. It was an agenda looking for a cause to push it.

* * *

But the complaint was, as anti-impeachment Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. aptly described it, "trivial in its charges and wrong in law." Moreover, the real culprit was Congress itself, because it passed a well-intentioned but ill-timed law (ill-timed because it stirred discontent among the rank and file court employees) RA 9227, which was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo last Oct. 23, giving a 100-percent increase in special allowances to justices and judges. This is to be derived over a four-year period from the controversial Judiciary Development Fund (JDF) which was created in 1984 by PD 1949. But the new law left only unguaranteed "surplus" funds to the rank-and-file employees, which naturally agitated them.

This law, authored in the Senate by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, was well-intentioned as it aimed to attract more lawyers through better salaries and allowances to fill up many vacancies in courts around the country, especially in the hardship posts, that have resulted in numerous case backlogs. Pangilinan says that while there was a 44 percent vacancy in first-level courts and a 30 percent nationwide vacancy rate at the time of the signing of the law, recent figures show that the number of applicants for judges has dramatically increased from June to August 2003. In the Eastern Samar regional trial court, for instance, applications jumped more than 100 percent; Agusan del Norte, 133 percent; Misamis Oriental, 600 percent; Ozamis City, 1,000 percent; and in Maimbong, Sulu, 40 percent.

* * *

Unfortunately the enactment of the law left the court employees quite dissatisfied, and they felt that the JDF, which was created primarily for the benefit of employees receiving the lowest salaries, had been turned upside down in favor of their bosses. Another bill authored by Sen. John Osmeña would restore the decree's original intention by giving court employees who are earning the smallest salaries the biggest allowances. Osmeña's bill should help quiet their ranks. But definitely, as we saw in the past three weeks, the whipping boy ought not to have been Chief Justice Davide since ironically he is perhaps one of the most reform-oriented Supreme Court chiefs, especially on the matter of employees' cost-of-living allowances and judicious spending of the JDF.

* * *

A lot has to be done to set the country on the right track again, but at this point it's difficult to say whether this can be done readily, considering that the core of the NPC in the House seems to be working for the political agenda of Cojuangco. Manila Rep. Harry Angping aptly described the NPC group as having remained "united to the end" despite all the pressures from their colleagues and constituents for them to withdraw their signatures from the impeachment complaint. In fact, the minority vote of 77 on the decision of Speaker Jose de Venecia to fully support the Court's ruling is almost the same as the minimum number needed to impeach, which is 76 votes. The NPC exhibits an enviable unity and discipline that puts the bigger Lakas to shame.

As an aside, it's interesting to point out that the more than 80 signatories to the impeachment complaint were subjected to tremendous pressure from their constituents, various NGOs, religious groups, etc. to withdraw. For instance, Cebu Rep. Nerissa Soon-Ruiz was said to have come so close to withdrawing her signature, but her husband was angered by the massive pressure from their overwhelmingly pro-Davide fellow Cebuanos so that in the end Ruiz stuck to the NPC group. Many lawmakers made themselves scarce in their home provinces and returned to Manila only last Monday. Thus, one can truly say that the 18 or so congressmen who withdrew their signatures in the end were truly brave and heroic.

* * *

At this point, it's logical to speculate on whether a modus vivendi between the NPC and the ruling party can continue. Can the "Sunshine Coalition" between the country's two biggest parties survive?

Analysts point out that the NPC can be expected to continue this modus vivendi since it doesn't have the numbers to oust De Venecia right now, a fact that became evident last Monday when Rep. Didagen Dilangalen moved to declare all positions vacant. Should the NPC succeed in ousting JDV, the collateral damage to them could be the loss, on the eve of the 2004 elections, of the chairmanships of some 15 or so major committees that NPC controls, thanks to the coalition. Most notable is the committee on justice chaired by Rep. Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar, which became pivotal in pushing the numbers on the second impeachment complaint, until the Court struck it down. But the NPC is likely to support its own presidential candidate who appears to be Fernando Poe Jr.

Lucky country, beautiful city

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

SYDNEY—I'm actually writing this on my last day in Australia, which I'm visiting for the first time. But we've been cooped up the last few days in the Peppers Fairmont Resort in Leura in the Blue Mountains, about one-and-a-half hours' drive from Sydney. I took part in the First Asian HPV Summit, joining oncologists, obstetrician-gynecologists, pathologists and researchers in talking about the latest developments in the field of HPV detection and cervical cancer prevention. We were all there on the invitation of Digene, a diagnostic technology company that is pioneering the marketing of the HPV DNA test.

But, having just finished a series on TB, I think I'll hold off on the discussion of HPV and cervical cancer for now and tell you instead what I've seen and experienced in the few days I've spent in "the lucky country," as Australians call their land.

The first thing I noticed upon landing at the Sydney airport were the video spots highlighting, by way of song, Australia's racially diverse population. "We are many but one," went the slogan, and I felt comforted by this tribute to Australia's migrant history. After all, not counting the Aborigines, everyone else in this country comes from migrant stock, right?

It was also a diverse group that assembled in the bus terminal as we prepared to make our way to the Blue Mountains. Digene had gathered participants from practically all over Asia—China, India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam (by way of the United States), Japan, Taiwan and, of course, Australia, though we keep forgetting it, too, is part of Asia. The Philippines had one of the smallest delegations, since aside from myself, the only other Filipino participant was Dr. Cecilia Ladines-Llave, head of the National Cancer Institute based in the Philippine General Hospital.

* * *

I IMMEDIATELY nodded off during the bus ride and therefore missed the magnificent views through the Sydney outskirts and the winding roads up the Blue Mountains, so-called because the mountainsides covered in eucalyptus trees take on a bluish hue when hit by sunlight from a certain angle.

Most of the time we were in the resort, the sun was hidden by fog and mist, chilling the air. I had come prepared for the middle of summer, as all the guidebooks said, but luckily I decided to take a sweater and coat, "just in case."

The view outside my window was exquisite, a postcard-perfect vignette of a small lake amid a garden of flowering shrubs and winding paths. One of the participants reported encountering a wallaby, a smaller species of kangaroo, during one of her walks.

For dinner during our second day, we were driven to Leura town proper and thence to Echo Point, a look-out overlooking a breathtaking panorama of the Katoomba Mountain range and Megalong Valley, which reminded us at some portions of photos of the Grand Canyon. But the main attraction at Echo Point is a rock formation known as "The Three Sisters," based on a legend about three beautiful young ladies of the Katoomba tribe who were turned into stone to prevent their marriage to three brothers from another tribe.

From Echo Point, we walked a few meters uphill to Lillianfels, a restaurant in an old wooden mansion that brought us back to Victorian days. Indeed, Leura itself seemed a throwback to the serene past, the very picture of a small English town, with quaint cottages and shuttered shops down its quiet streets.

* * *

IN STARK contrast to the quiet and peace of the Blue Mountains is the bustle of Sydney. Dr. Llave and I had asked to stay just one more day after the summit's close, so we could at least say we had seen something of Australia beyond our hotel rooms and the conference site.

With Jody Thompson, a Digene marketing officer based in London who has family in Perth but has yet to fully explore Sydney, we set off on foot to get acquainted with the city.

Our first stop was, of course, shopping, at Paddy's Market which is something like an orderly *tiangge* for dry goods, clothing and souvenir items that were priced, so previous shoppers told us, fully a third below those sold elsewhere.

Then we walked down a few blocks to Chinatown for a pleasant lunch in a shaded arcade lined by Chinese restaurants.

* * *

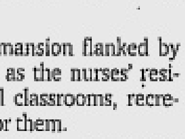
FORTIFIED, we walked a few more blocks in the general direction of the Sydney harbor, passing by the Victorian-era Town Hall, a sweet, small jewel of a structure, and the Victoria building, an excellent example of creative re-use, with a heavily-curlicued exterior housing an upmarket mall. Indeed, sprinkled around Sydney are many more examples of exquisite historic architecture preserved and put to practical use today, testimony to the value the residents place on their heritage.

When we got to the Circle Quay, the center of Sydney's famous harbor, we were simply blown away by the view, dominated by the Harbor Bridge with the gleaming "sails" of the Opera House punctuating one end.

We had a chance to better appreciate this breathtaking view aboard the Manly Rocket Express, an hour-long harbor cruise from Darling Harbor to Manly, Australia's first seaside resort. I can't describe the exhilaration I felt, standing on the boat's prow in the brilliant sunlight as we flew across the water, while the incomparable view of the bridge and Opera House sped by, with the additional thrill of passing sailboats tilting against the wind.

Australia is indeed a lucky country (and I hope it proves lucky, indeed, during the semis against the New Zealand Kiwis in the Rugby World Cup!), and I wish its people—a rainbow of diversity—the fortitude to protect the natural beauty of their lovely country.

A 1925 tourist (2)



SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

THE OTHER thing that struck Potous was the prevalence of smoking among all classes. The elegant lady presiding over a meal smoked special cigarettes after eating. On the streets, women stuck enormous cigars in their mouths. Fat friars from different religious orders in *paseos* and parks would be seen smoking *cigarros*, and in the theater, in movie houses, everywhere, in a word, people smoked without let-up. The odd man out was the one who didn't smoke.

In the same manner that *buyo* was once routinely offered to visitors, even those who didn't smoke were now offered cigars and cigarettes. The prosperity of tobacco companies was therefore no surprise, given that the whole population appeared to be addicted. Excess tobacco leaves were exported to Spain.

In the public buildings, Spain's escutcheon had not been removed, beginning at Malacañang where the emblem remained over the main door. It was the same at the archbishop's palace, which was decorated with paintings and pictures of another era dominated by portraits of those who had served as archbishops of Manila, including Nozaleda.

The overall image of the city was pleasant, made more so by a landscape full of corpulent trees and vegetation that was always green, embellishing the appearance of the streets, the frame of the houses and the contour of public buildings.

Although the loss of their colony to the United States still hurt, Potous found things to admire. The facilities of the Philippine General Hospital were apparently impressive despite various other hospitals having been established in Manila. The PGH was composed of several pavilions for the treatment of different diseases, with the objective of obtaining a reduction in the death rate. A large sign at the entrance read: "Go quietly." A little distance away was a beautiful, well-kept promenade, bordered by palm trees and verdant trees leading to the main building, an architectural jewel, according to Potous. Nearby rose a splendid mansion flanked by immense columns that served as the nurses' residence. The building contained classrooms, recreation halls and other facilities for them.

Since the American occupation, numerous buildings dedicated to education had been constructed and schools and instruction centers of every kind, from university to elementary, had been set up. American ideals and values had penetrated the minds of Filipinos and an infinity of women existed with careers and professions that in Spain were reserved for men (such as law). Potous was surprised to find in the fiscal's office of the City Hall of Manila, a woman lawyer, Stra. Natividad Almeda, who served with singular aptitude.

At some point, he was taken to visit Ft. McKinley (now Ft. Bonifacio). He noted that this was no fortification at all—not even a fort, or an old castle. It was not a fort in the accepted sense of the word but it was merely used by the American forces as a garrison that included their quarters, a splendid military hospital, an electricity generating plant, an ice plant, polo fields, courts for tennis and other games, storehouses and ammunition dumps, clinics, bakeries and, strangely enough, a cemetery where both American and Spanish soldiers were buried.

The Spanish soldiers buried in McKinley were those who fell in battle when the American forces advanced toward Intramuros. The Spanish soldiers, who formed the last line of defense and were killed, were picked up by the Americans who piously gave them a Christian burial. Some could not be identified since they carried no documents giving their names, ranks or serial numbers, and due to the heat, their bodies decomposed quickly so that no one could identify them.

Their sepulchers were not abandoned but were well-kept, and on Memorial Day when the Americans remembered their fallen comrades, the Spanish soldiers were not forgotten and their graves were decorated with flowers and the Spanish consul and prominent Spaniards were invited to take part in the rites.

Although he was not accustomed to American ways, Potous could not help but admire the colossal installation for the American soldiers at McKinley. Each soldier had his own iron bed painted white and equipped with a mosquito net. In the garrison, there were numerous bathrooms with individual showers. Married officers were housed apart in what they called cottages, which were surrounded by a large porch and a garden.

Excellent roads traversed the whole area, and to maintain communications with the capital, there was a tram system and buses that left at definite hours for the use of the soldiers. Here were found the infantry men, engineers and those under the commanding general.

These are mere details that show how much things have changed in 80 years even if most of these places still exist. In the chapel of the Paco cemetery was an image of a dark Christ with extended arms. Below on either side of the altar were the images of St. John and Our Lady. On the side of the epistle was a tomb with the inscription (translated), "Excelentissimo Sr. Don Ramon Maria Solano y Lladera, Gov. Militar y Capt. General de Zamboanga was mortally wounded in Mindanao and came to Manila to die."

(*From "Un Año en Manila," Juan Potous y Martinez, 1925.*)

The system

YOUNG BLOOD

Redentor Castillo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

MY students are lovely. I can't blame if the level of their knowledge is still in the elementary grades, not in high school where they are enrolled. I can't blame them if they can't spell "pencil" correctly. I can't blame them if they don't know their own birthdays. I can't blame them if they don't know what is Asia or where they exactly live. I can't blame them if they can't construct a simple sentence.

My students are just lovely. They laugh even if they are tired, after walking several kilometers through knee-deep mud during rainy seasons or hot, dusty roads during summer. Their eyes light up when they hear new words even if their hands and bodies are bruised from making copra. They are on the school grounds even before their teachers wake up in the morning. They smell good even if the water they clean their bodies with came from shallow wells. They are eager to learn, although they find it hard to pay the tuition of P100 a month.

I teach Araling Panlipunan and English in the highlands of Buenavista, Quezon, in the Bondoc Peninsula. I thought teaching would be easy. I had no idea that the hardest part would be seeing your students grope for words and in the end looking at their answers with pity and sadness. If I could only teach them 24 hours a day, I would.

I was struck with disbelief when my second-year students said Antartica, Europe and Africa were countries and first-year students could not tell where Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao were. They don't even know what's going on outside their own barangays, and only a few of them have seen a newspaper. Most do not have the faintest idea what they want to be in the future.

I went back and taught them lessons they should have learned in grade school before starting our first real high school lesson. After the first week, I already felt that time was running out.

My students have to move when it rains because when it rains outside it also rains inside the classroom. If you looked at the roof, you would probably think that it had been struck by a meteor shower.

When the sun is at its hottest, you will feel as if you were being baked alive. My students laugh when they see me drenched in my own sweat and tell me to buy an air-conditioning unit.

We hold classes inside a half-finished barangay hall. We can hear the lectures in the other class because only a small wall divides the first- and second-year classrooms. The barangay hall is open and the students are being distracted by noises outside like the sounds of horses or a power saw being used to down trees.

Our school caters to students from five barangays. It is the high school in the area. Recently we learned that our school had been reclassified as an extension of another national high school because our enrollment had not reached the minimum of 100 students for an independent school.

My three co-teachers are not from the barangay where the school is located, but from another town. They have to walk two and a half hours through steep slopes to get there—and that is presuming the weather is fine. And these are young women. So they go home only on weekends.

Only one of my co-teachers has passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers, so the other two are teaching as volunteers. That means they have to settle for measly allowances, which are not even enough to buy books and materials for the school.

College graduates are a rarity in the barangay because very few families can support a child in college. That is why it breaks my heart that my co-teachers cannot help their own families financially because of the low pay they are receiving.

But they are not discouraged. "*Konting tiis pa*," they tell me. People like them are the real heroes of our country for they are people who are in need, and yet they sacrifice for the benefit of the community.

It helps that our students and our parents sometimes give us their produce of *kalabasa*, *malunggay* and other vegetables for our meals. These people look up to us, and that is one of the things that makes our job quite satisfying.

There is no telephone line in the barangay. We have to climb a steep mountain up to where we have a breathtaking view of the mountain ranges just to get the signal that would allow us to communicate with the outside world. But we can't stay long at the top since both the military and the New People's Army are observing our every movement.

Snail mail is not a very good option. Letters from Manila are delivered one month after they are mailed—and that is if the weather is good.

To make a long story short, we do not have the amenities and comforts we became used to when we were studying in Manila. We are far from our families, tortured physically, emotionally and financially. But we have accepted these difficulties because we chose to serve.

The Bondoc Peninsula is treacherous but rich. Environmentalists must have forgotten the place. I have heard talk about sightings of the Philippine eagle. Pythons and cobras are considered as delicacies, but they are fast becoming extinct because people also treat them as pests.

Somebody please help the place. The environmental degradation is proceeding at a tremendous phase. Unscrupulous politicians are ravaging the rivers by taking away boulders and stones to build roads. *Kaingin* is still widely practiced, making the peninsula an environmental disaster that is waiting to happen.

If only enough education can be given to the people, they will be aware of their rights and they will have a more prosperous life without destroying the natural wonders around them.

The system hinders the development of poor communities like this. Roads are not the only measure of development. Without proper education, the community will remain impoverished even if high-rise buildings should rise at the town center. The government must make education the priority in countryside development. The Department of Education must develop a curriculum that fits the need of poor communities. I doubt if DepEd officials who make the policies with regard to rural education have once stepped and taught inside a high school in the countryside.

People in far-flung barangays need proper education so that they can rise up from their poverty. But to able to do this, the educational system must re-educate itself.

Redentor Castillo, 24, plans to take up his master's in labor and industrial relations next semester at the University of the Philippines. He wants the students whom he left suddenly and indefinitely to hang on.

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Needed: real-life 'Panday'

MANY Filipinos, especially traditional politicians, are pushing for Fernando Poe Jr.'s presidential candidacy in the 2004 elections. They argue that he is very popular with the masses and he is not the center of any controversy.

The best argument for FPJ's not running for the presidency is precisely this absence of controversy. His failure and inability to take a clear moral stand on the many issues that our country faced in the past and in the present, clearly shows his lack of moral courage and his failure to appreciate the tremendous impact of these issues on the life of our people especially the poor. Where was FPJ in the struggles against the evils of martial law? Where was FPJ during the confetti revolution to give justice to Ninoy Aquino and other human rights victims? When Filipinos by the thousands were risking their lives during the 1986 People Power Revolt, where was FPJ?

The answer to all these questions is silence! Fernando Poe Jr. is Mr. Nowhere Man. He was silent and absent in all these historic events. Why? Was he not interested in the freedoms, dignity, progress and sovereignty of our people? Was his friendship with the Marcoses and his cronies greater than his love for our country? The real sin of FPJ against the Filipino people is not the sin of commission but the sin of omission. FPJ is a reel hero but not a real hero who fought against the oppressors of the poor in the real world of our people!

One of the moral problems of our country is corruption—so widespread and well-entrenched that a combination of system reforms, leadership by example and political will is needed. The next president of our country should have the moral courage and the track record to go after the culture of corruption. Can we rely on FPJ to do better than Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the fight against corruption? His silence on the massive and systematic corruption of the martial law government and his campaigning for Erap's presidential bid and his loyalty to Erap even today, do not speak well of FPJ's ability to curb corruption.

We have a saying: "Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are." Who are the friends of FPJ urging him to run for the presidency? Maybe they see FPJ as their savior from the crimes they have committed against our people. But can FPJ save our country from corruption, terrorism, poverty and coups?

As a movie fan of FPJ, I love FPJ. But I will never vote for him even for the post of barangay captain. Our loyalty to our country should be more sacred than our loyalty to our show-biz idols. What our country needs is a real hero who can slay the dragon of poverty and corruption, not an imaginary Panday who can only slay monsters and evil men in the world of make-believe.

—RAUL F. ALEJANDRINO,
professor, Philosophy
Department, Miriam College,
Quezon City

Interpreting the Constitution

I LIKE Neal Cruz's column a lot and I often agree with his take on some issues. Cruz's analyses are well-written, making him even more convincing. But allow me to disagree with Cruz on his column titled, "Confused minds at Supreme Court hearing."

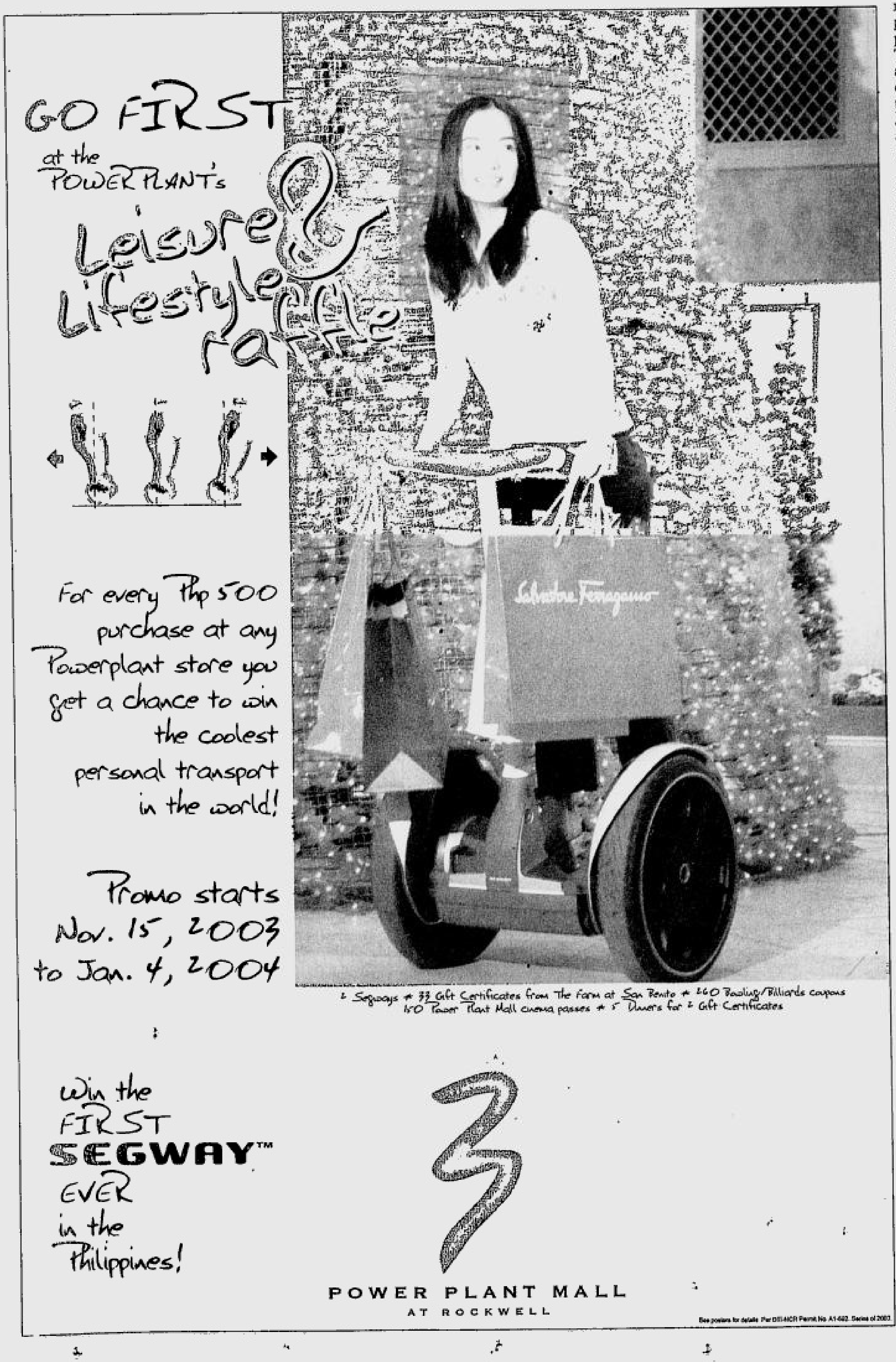
I'm a law student and it is basic in statutory construction that, in case of confusion, one who seeks to interpret a legal provision must ascertain the intent of the lawmakers or, in the case of the Constitution, its framers. I need not illustrate here that certain words have varying definitions or interpretations. I bet my last pair of socks Cruz's own Webster's New World Dictionary has a list of various usage for certain words. This fundamental principle in statutory construction, therefore, makes sense.

It is very clear from the transcript of the Constitutional Commission that it actually meant "filing" when it used "initiate." The intent is very clear and the reason for it is adequately explained by the commissioners. Why this confusion by our honorable congressmen—one of them a bar topnotcher—is beyond me.

So how then can we prevent a congressman from filing a frivolous complaint? Simple, Mr. Cruz: Congress need only to impose penalties for empty complaints, instead of giving a different meaning to the word "initiate." Had they done this, we would not have this so-called constitutional crisis.

The House has no business interpreting the Constitution for this is the sole domain of the Supreme Court. In its haste to prevent another Rep. Prospero Pichay from filing empty impeachment complaints, it inadvertently forgot its main role—to make laws, not interpret them.

—LARRI-NIL VELOSO,
G/F Pelaez Bldg.,
A.S. Fortuna St., Mandaue City



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DENR not defied or mocked

ALLOW us to clarify the news item "DENR order defied: Firm makes mockery of suspension of logging in Aurora" (PDI, 10/23/03) by Tonette Orejas.

The story stated that Toplite Lumber was given a permit to ship out more than 800 logs from its log pond which the company cut, prior to the suspension of its harvesting operations on Aug. 1, 2003.

It is, therefore, very clear that there was no defiance, much less a mockery of the environment department's suspension order since the subject logs were cut before the suspension order was issued. Furthermore, there were no new cuttings in the company's Integrated Forestry Management Agreement (Ifma) area.

I appreciate the initiative of Bataris, an Aurora-based NGO led by Joey Estreber, for its vigilance in the illegal logging drive. Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun has directed DENR regional executive directors to involve local communities and NGOs in monitoring the inventory and shipment of logs in their respective areas. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources encourages the deputation of members of duly-registered NGOs as special DENR officers subject to DENR regulations.

Thank you for giving attention to our clarification.

—ROLANDO L. METIN,
undersecretary for management
and technical services,
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources,
Visayas Avenue, Diliman, QC

Kyoto protocol today, Stockholm convention next

THE OTHER week, the Philippines became the 120th out of 161 countries to have ratified the Kyoto protocol—a global treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon monoxide—since the agreement was negotiated in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997.

We welcome and hail this ratification of the Kyoto protocol by the Senate as a concrete country participation in the war against global warming.

As part of a large network of non-governmental organizations pushing for its ratification ever since the country became a signatory to the treaty on March 15, 1998, we view the Senate ratification as a commitment by the Philippines to a higher level of consciousness to discharge our function as custodians of the Earth and as protectors of our own local environment.

The dangers of global warming have been identified and scientifically established. It must be given equal concern as much as clean water and clean air.

In the 1980s, global warming was linked with excessive burning of fossil fuels such as oil, gas and coal. In 1990, the inter-governmental panel on climate change noted that the 1990s was the warmest decade and 1998 was the warmest year.

The country played an active role in the drafting of the protocol when the Philippine position, which I presented as chair of the Philippine delegation to Kyoto in 1997 and the country's representative in the negotiations as chair of the Senate committee on environment, was fully adopted as part of the inputs of the Asia-Pacific group of countries.

But because the country is not considered a major source of carbon dioxide emission unlike developed countries, the Philippines can contribute in the implementation of the treaty by seriously reconsidering its watershed programs and the use of fossil fuels.

A systematically rehabilitated forest will serve as a "carbon sink" that will recycle the massive concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Likewise, a paradigm shift to the use of "clean" and renewable sources of energy—solar, water, wind, natural gas and biomass—should be encouraged.

After the Kyoto protocol ratification, the network of NGOs are now calling for the ratification of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), an international treaty I signed as environment secretary on behalf of the Philippines in Sweden on May 23, 2001.

The Stockholm Convention calls for the global phaseout of 12 highly toxic POPs, chemical substances that persist in the environment, bio-accumulate through the food web, and pose a risk of causing adverse effects to animal and human health and the environment.

—HEHERSON T. ALVAREZ,
founding chair,
EarthSavers Movement,
Gotesco Regency Twin Towers B,
1129 Natividad Lopez St.,
Ermita, Manila

Forest management steps clarified

THIS is in response to the article published in the INQUIRER's Across the Nation section dated Oct. 26 titled, "Barely surviving in their ancestral land" by Aquiles Z. Zonio. The article focused on the plight of the Danlag B'laan Multipurpose Cooperative (DBMC) of Tampakan, South Cotabato, who are holders of a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Claim-Community-Based Forest Management Agreement (CADC-CBFMA) with an affirmed resource use permit (RUP).

Please allow us to clarify a few critical information to put in context our overall approach on CBFM implementation and our effort to support the livelihood of upland farmers, more specifically indigenous peoples who are recipients of our CBFMA.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources under my administration, indeed issued a suspension order dated Jan. 13, 2003 on all RUPs as a result of validated reports on abuses, committed particularly on harvesting of naturally growing timber. However, such a measure was resorted to so as not to penalize communities but to immediately stop abuses by unscrupulous individuals and sectors out to abuse the permit. I immediately ordered a nationwide multisectoral assessment on which to base my subsequent actions. Records would show that lifting orders were subsequently issued with appropriate safety nets and emphasizing the principle of accountability and responsibility.

Moreover, a report of the Multisectoral Assessment Team—created through Regional Special Order No. 2003-093 dated June 9 2003—showed that the DBMC allegedly failed to assume its responsibility to protect the entire forest area within its CADC-CBFMA against illegal logging, *kaingin* and other unauthorized extraction of forest products even in areas with elevation of more than 1,000 meters asl. Its investigation report indicated freshly cut lumber during the conduct of field investigation and continuous cutting of naturally growing trees even after the suspension. A certification likewise from the local Philippine National Police of Tampakan indicated a truck loaded with illegal lumber of more or less 3,500 board feet owned by a member was impounded for investigation.

While we fully support our CBFM partners, we cannot tolerate violations of the agreement especially if our own people commit these.

—ELISEA GOZUN, secretary,
Department of Environment and
Natural Resources,
Visayas Avenue, Diliman,
Quezon City

ECC disability claim kicked around

I WAS employed by the Central Azucarera de Tarlac as a belt conveyor operator at its refined sugar warehouse. In the course of employment on March 6, 1995, I suffered a lumbar spine injury. Immediately thereafter, I was granted 120 days' Temporary Total Disability. Afterwards the Social Security System granted me 30 months' permanent total disability benefit under PD 626, as amended, up to January 1999.

On request for additional benefits (disability) the SSS denied/disapproved my claim three times: Jan. 28, 1999, Feb. 26, 1999 and March 22, 1999.

Early last September 2003, I filed an appeal with the Employees Compensation Commission to review my claim. Unfortunately however, the ECC remanded my claim to the SSS in its letter of Sept. 25, 2003. *Napakasakit po ang ginawa ng* ECC *sa mga* claimants *na katulad ko. Itong* batch *po namin ay* 13 *kaming katao na binalik ang aming mga* EC claims *para daw* for the SSS to finally determine the compensability of our claims under PD 626, as amended. Three times *nang na*-disapprove *sa* SSS *ang aking* claim *pagkatapos ibabalik sa* SSS *ang* claim. *Ito ay* judicial football *at* plain delaying tactic on the part of the ECC. Since 1975 thousands of claimants like me all over the country had suffered the same fate.

How can President Macapagal-Arroyo realize a strong republic if bureaucrats like people at the ECC keep dilly-dallying on claims of employees who were disabled or died in the service?

The remanding of claim cannot be found in the Amended Rules on Employees Compensation implementing PD 626, as amended. Since January 1999 *wala na po akong* income *dahil sa aking* disability.

I now call on the ECC to resolve my case immediately. *Kahit* delayed *ang aking* claim, *magpapasalamat pa rin ako kung ilabas ang* decision *sa lalong madaling panahon.*

—NARCISO J. VILLANUEVA,
Avocado Street, Maligaya,
San Miguel, Tarlac

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4 dead as 'Weng' hits land

FOUR persons, including two kids, were electrocuted as heavy rains spawned by tropical storm "Weng."

The Office of Civil Defense identified those killed as Lek-lek Budino and Leonisa Demi, both 11 and residents of Daet, Camarines Norte; Danilo Orolfo, 36, of San Felipe, Naga City, and Juniel Buising, 32, of Guinobal, Tabaco City.

Tropical storm Weng toppled power lines and cut power off in many parts of the Visayas and Southern Luzon as thousands of ship passengers were stranded in various ports.

Northern Samar and Eastern Samar lost power Thursday night. Power went back in Borongan, Eastern Samar yesterday.

Thousands of passengers bound for Metro Manila were still at the port of Allen, Northern Samar after the Coast Guard stopped small inter-island vessels from going out to sea.

Classes in all levels were suspended in Capiz, Aklan, and in northern areas of Antique and Iloilo in Western Visayas; Cebu City and province in Central Visayas; and in Tacloban City and other areas in Eastern Visayas.

All flights to and from Roxas City in Capiz, Kalibo and Caticlan in Aklan were also cancelled.

Storm signal No. 2 was hoisted over Aklan, Capiz, northern Iloilo and northern Antique in the Visayas; southern Mindoro, Romblon, western Masbate, Cuyo Island and northern Palawan including Calamian Island in Southern Luzon.

Weng carried winds of up to 100 kph.

Storm signal No. 1 is over the rest of Masbate including Burias Island, Southern Quezon, Marinduque, Batangas, the rest of Mindoro and the rest of Palawan; northern Cebu including Bantayan Island; Panay, Guimaras and Negros Occidental.

The Coast Guard in Iloilo barred all sea vessels weighing below 1,000 gross tons from sailing. Trips of passenger ferryboats plying the Iloilo-Bacolod and Iloilo-Guimaras routes were canceled.

In Biliran, a landslide was reported in the village of Catmon, in the town of Naval. No one was reported injured.

In Negros Oriental, two fishermen were rescued Thursday night in waters off Sibulan town. The boat carrying Jason Dime, 32, and Oscar Orcullo, 20, of Barangay Ajong, San Jose, Negros Oriental, capsized after it was battered by big waves spawned by Weng.

In Lucena City, all sea vessels were stopped from sailing at the height of Weng.

Christopher Caunan, Coast Guard commander in Dalahican, Quezon, said there were no reports yet of casualties.

He said vessels dropped anchor at ports nearest them. "No ferry will be allowed to leave port with typhoon Weng still around," said Caunan.

The Coast Guard also cancelled the scheduled trips of ships. Stranded passengers were in the care of barangay officials.

Weng also cut power in various parts of Quezon province and led to classes being suspended.

The storm caused a multiple vehicle accident on the southbound lane of the South Luzon Expressway in Laguna, bringing traffic to a standstill for hours.

Wilson Reyes, of the Philippine National Construction Co., said the accidents took place at the Sta. Rosa exit of the highway and at the Carmona portion. *Joey Gabieta, Nestor Burgos, Romy Amarado and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau and Delfin Mallari, Romy Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Groups of farmers back NFA exec on GMA program on importation of rice

LEGAZPI CITY—Rice farmers yesterday expressed support for the call of National Food Authority council head Angelito Sarmiento to help stabilize rice prices by extending two centerpiece programs of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The farmers' groups National Confederation of Irrigators Association, Hukbalahap Veterans and Regional Farmers' Action Council and Philippine Farmers Advisory Board expressed their support for Sarmiento.

The groups said Sarmiento is helping provide additional income for farmers through the rice importation program and stabilize rice prices for the benefit of consumers.

Sarmiento had said he was in favor of the extension of the Farmers as Importers Program and the Farmers as Distributors Program, which Ms Macapagal implemented to augment farmers' incomes and keep rice prices stable.

"The program benefited farmers, consumers and the entire country. We are glad to know that Sarmiento stood firm on his ground to support the programs' continuity," said the farmers in a statement released here.

Earlier the farmers' groups volunteered to put on hold the arrival of 100,000 metric tons of imported rice at the peak of the harvest season during which locally-produced rice flooded the market.

The groups said they did this so as not to hurt the production of domestic rice and unnecessarily affect local farm gate prices.

"They were correct. They have to set aside the remaining quota for the lean months of rice harvest," the farmers quoted Sarmiento as saying.

The NFA council had rejected the arrival of 100,000 metric tons of imported rice when the two programs ended in August, resulting in losses to the farmers' groups.

According to NFA administrator Arthur Yap, the country has a national supply of rice good for 58 days.

The farmers' groups, however, criticized Raul Montemayor, their council representative, for opposing the extension of the two programs, saying Montemayor doesn't speak for all of them.

They expressed hope that Montemayor would have a change of heart after evaluating the positive effects of Ms Macapagal's two pro-farmer programs. *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Cebu court employees warn of strike over pay demand

By Suzzane B. Salva and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Take us seriously or else.

The warning was contained in the one-page manifesto of the rank and file employees of the Municipal Trial Courts in Cities and the Regional Trial Courts in Cebu.

The manifesto reiterated the employees' clamor for exemption from the Salary Standardization Law and for salary increases.

Should their plea continue to fall on deaf ears, the manifesto said the employees might go on strike.

If the employees in Cebu would take a more forceful action to dramatize their demand, the manifesto said "the move will generate into a serious and disturbing chain reaction nationwide."

"We do not want to inspire this kind of general indignation much as we want to support and work well with our superiors," according to the manifesto, a copy of which would be sent to Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"In this old and long struggle, we see no promise of being taken seriously in our demands, which eventually placed us in a situation where our patience and ability to bear and endure some overpowering persuasions, and such would leave us no room but to strike at some Achilles' heel," they said.

A clerk of court, however, said the one-page manifesto was not the general sentiment of the rank and file in Cebu.

"Some do not agree to it. They are barking at the wrong tree. The matter should be addressed to the lawmakers and not to the Supreme Court," said a lawyer who asked not to be named.

Aside from salary increase, the manifesto also asked the restoration of their benefits, which were previously given by the Supreme Court but were later removed.

These allowances included among others educational, rice, medical, hazard pay, dental and amelioration.

Soriquez says DPWH 'open book'

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways is an open book, according to Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez.

In a statement, Soriquez said his priority had been transparency in the department.

He said one proof of his campaign for transparency is the use of the DPWH web site where bid schedules, results and other purchases could be viewed by the public.

"We make sure that all our projects and other activities are known to the public," said Soriquez in a statement.

Soriquez said it was also he who initiated the Project Advisory and Monitoring System which he said was an antigraft tool that allows the participation of local government units, non-government organizations and concerned individuals.

He also activated the Complaints and Action Center through which complaints against DPWH would be coursed.

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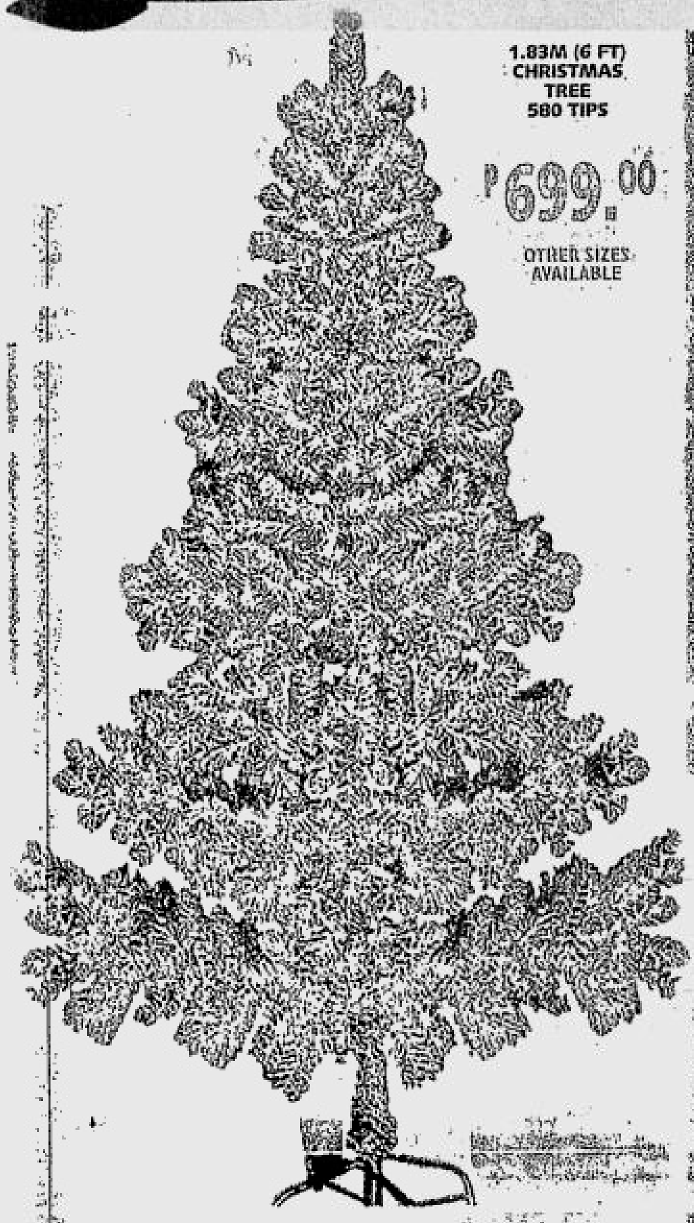

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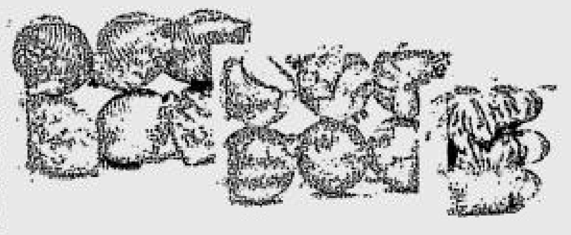

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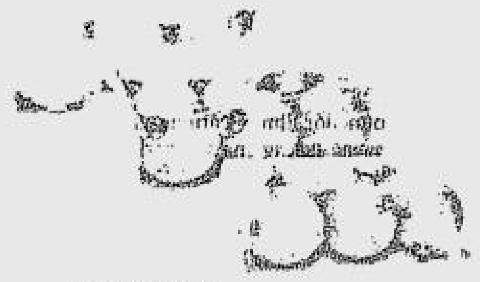

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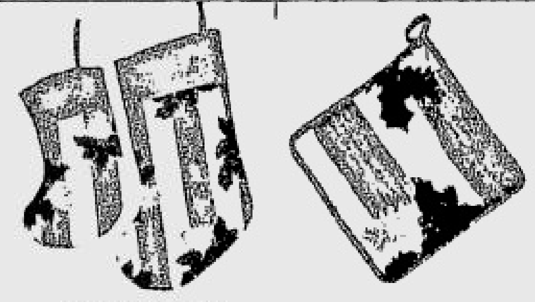

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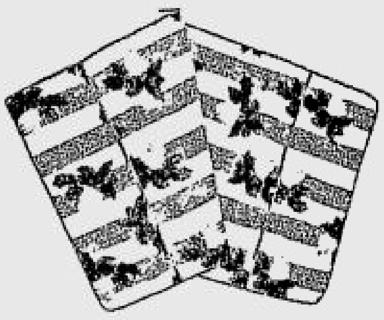

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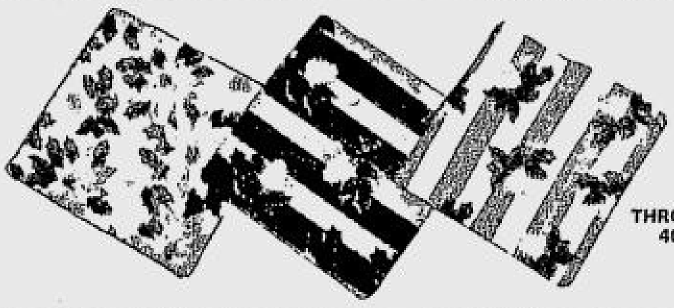

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RECONCILIATION OR NOT

PCGG to pursue cases

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Carla Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The call of President Macapagal for "total reconciliation" will not stop the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) from prosecuting cases involving business tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco and the Marcos family.

PCGG commissioner Ruben Carranza said he talked to PCGG chair Haydee Yorac on Wednesday after the President announced that she wanted to mend fences with the Marcos family, deposed president Joseph Estrada and Cojuangco.

"Yorac said nothing has changed as far as the PCGG is concerned," he added.

Reconciliation

Carranza said in a radio interview in Cebu that reconciliation should not mean as settlement of the cases.

"This must not mean forgetting the cases or giving up on the cases, or not doing anything anymore. Whatever it means, it does not mean that the cases . . . will no longer be pursued," Carranza said.

Carranza said if these people were sincere in accepting reconciliation, then they must first admit their sins, return what they took from the people and issue a public apology.

Compromise

Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra said Ms Macapagal should not compromise the welfare of the Filipino people and the country in her quest for "total reconciliation" with antigovernment or opposition forces.

The Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), however, expressed support for the President's offer, saying the move would provide a good business climate in the country.

Blame nat'l law allowing casino, councilor says

By Rod Bansag
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—A councilor who belonged to the group that endorsed the operations of a casino in Camp John Hay said protesters should not blame the city council for the endorsement.

Councilor Federico Mandapat Jr. said Congress should be blamed for the mess because the local government could not pass an ordinance prohibiting gambling since there is a national law that gives operators a gaming franchise or license.

Mandapat, during a dialogue with anti-casino groups on Wednesday, said if a casino would operate in Camp John Hay, it would all boil down to discipline among the people.

Mandapat said a 1994 resolution on the 19 conditions for the development of Camp John Hay, which outlined a "no casino policy," is a "valid, legal and binding contract" between the city government and the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

"But the contract is still subservient to the national law. The national law allows the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. to grant franchises to any existing entrepreneur to operate either sweepstakes, lotto, bingo, casino and the like," Mandapat said.

He said the Supreme Court, in several decisions, ruled that a city or any local government unit could not pass an ordinance or resolution to prevent the implementation of a national law.

Councilor Delfin Balajadia proposed that regulations should be enforced once the casino operation starts since the city council could not do much to block a legal franchise.

Balajadia assured protesters the casino would be opened only to tourists and members of Camp John Hay.

Councilor Faustino Olowan said the casino would help generate funds for other projects of the city and create jobs.

Councilor Elmer Datuin, while sitting as acting mayor, had already approved a permit for the casino on Nov. 7.

On Wednesday, at least 2,500 residents, composed mostly of students and members of militant groups, marched through downtown and gathered in front of the City Hall to protest the city council's approval of the casino. *With a report from Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Palace suspends Misamis gov allied with Estrada

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Malacañang ordered the suspension of Misamis Oriental Gov. Antonio Calingin over an alleged irregular telephone expansion project that the provincial government undertook in 1999.

The interior department's Northern Mindanao regional office yesterday served the notice for Calingin's 60-day suspension, which was signed by Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo.

In the same order, Malacañang installed Vice Gov. Miguel de Jesus, Calingin's accuser, as acting governor.

De Jesus took his oath before DILG director Rodolfo Razul.

In May, De Jesus filed a complaint before the Office of the President against Calingin for alleged dishonesty and grave negligence in connection with the P25-million telephone expansion project in Gingoog City in 1999.

De Jesus said Calingin approved the purchase of a telephone exchange switch even though the existing switch was capable of upgrade.

"Worst, the equipment they bought were old and refurbished which could only amount to P5M," De Jesus said in his complaint.

The provincial government has paid about P12.5 million for the purchase of another switch.

Calingin has repeatedly denied the charges.

In a recent interview with Bombo Radyo here, he dismissed the charges as politically motivated.

Calingin is a supporter of former President Joseph Estrada.

But he and De Jesus belong to the same party, the Padayon Pilipino, headed by Cagayan de Oro Mayor Vicente Emano. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT is exactly 551 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

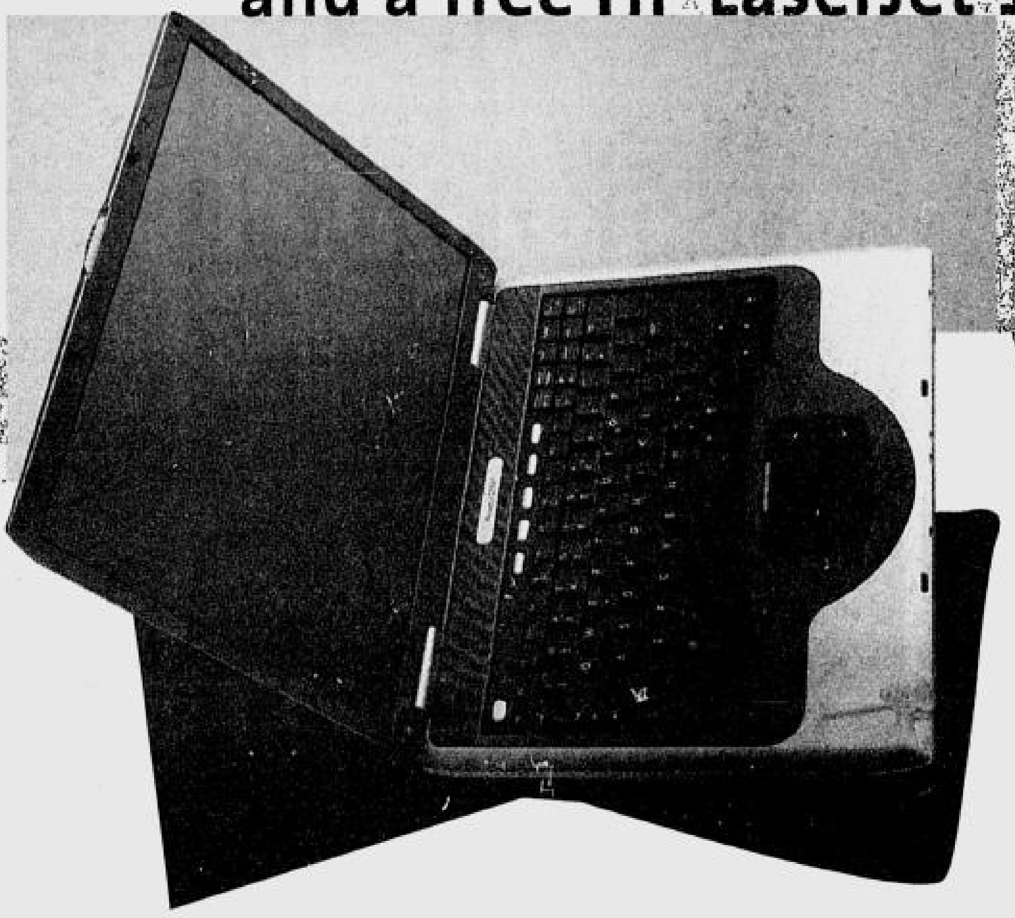
Rebs attack dad's house

CAMP SIONGCO, Maguindanao—Moro rebels fired at the house of a provincial board member in Barangay Poblacion in Shariff Aguak town on Monday evening but missed their target and his family, the military reported.

Maj. Julieto Ando, spokesperson of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, said no one was injured in the early evening attack but the house of Board Member Datu Adzis Utto suffered damages.

Masked men allegedly belonging to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front under Commander Abdulwahid Talil Tandok stormed Utto's house around 11 p.m. and opened fire at it.

Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3319, Series of 2003.

Crocodile park snaps to attention

By Jolene Bulambot
Cebu City

LOCATED in one of the component cities of Cebu is a nature park that is home to a rare and endangered species of large amphibious thick-skinned, long-tailed reptiles.

Famous for its saltwater crocodiles, Crocolandia is a nature conservation center that serves as a safe abode not only to crocodiles but also to other wildlife and threatened animals.

Crocolandia sits in a one-hectare park in Barangay Biazon, Talisay City, 10 km from Cebu City. It started operations on Jan. 6, 2001.

Private individuals and professors who have dedicated their lives to the protection and conservation of wildlife and endangered species manage the park.

Conceptualized in November 2000, the place was a turtle farm for 25 years until Nellie Chu, president of the Crocolandia Foundation, decided to convert it into a crocodile park in honor of the unusual gift that her sister received for her birthday years ago.

The gift was Magellan, then five years old, a saltwater crocodile with no recorded origin. It was donated to the foundation as a gift to Chu's sister.

When it was eight years old, everybody in the foundation was surprised to discover that it was not male after all. Just like hens, female crocodiles can lay eggs without copulation.

Fortunately, another male crocodile, later named Lapu-Lapu, was donated to the foundation. The pair has 28 offsprings now.

Today, Lapu-Lapu is the second largest saltwater crocodile in the country, measuring 17-feet long and 2.5-3 feet wide. He is about 40 years old, while Magellan died three months ago at age 35.

Fees and donations

The foundation does not generate financial support from the local government. It survives from entrance fees and modest donations from schools, corporations and local and foreign organizations supporting wildlife conservation.

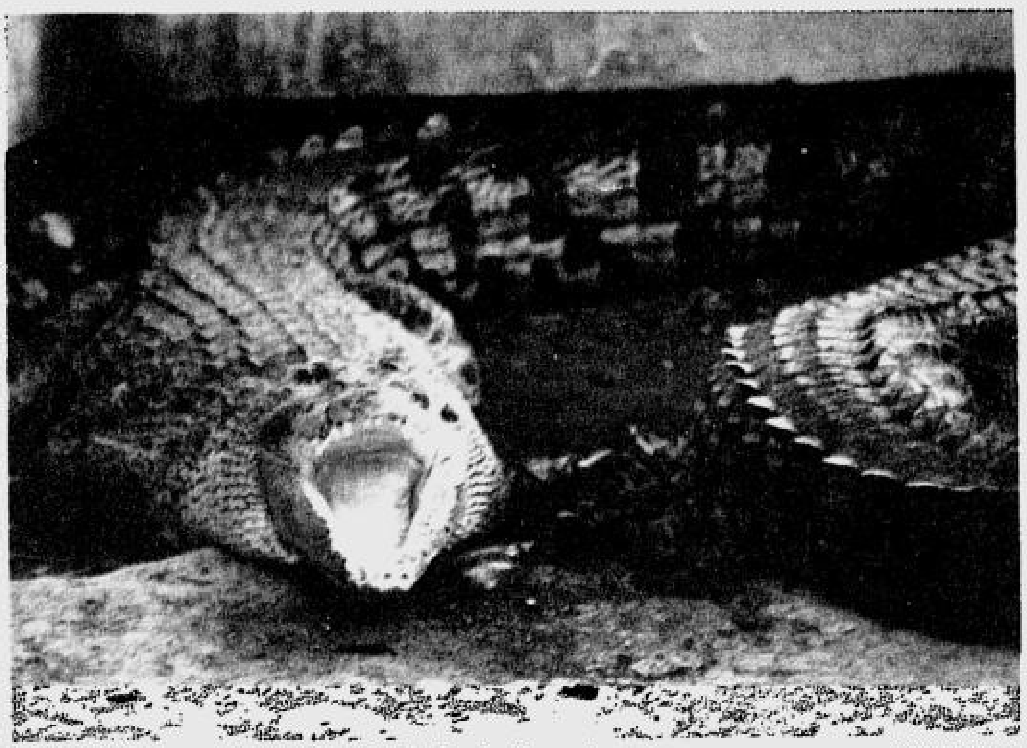
Crocolandia opens everyday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entrance fee for adults is P50 and for children P25. A 20-percent discount is given for a group of 25 visitors.

Aside from the crocodile and turtle ponds, the park has small animal enclosures, mini-zoo, aviary, botanical gardens, boating and fishing areas, wetland, picnic ground, lecture rooms, butterfly sanctuary, restaurant and mini-museum.

Visitors can rent fishing sets for P30 and pay P100 for every kilo of *tilapia* and *bangus* (milkfish) they catch.

The mini-zoo has civet cats, tarsiers, sailfin and water monitor lizards, bleeding heart pigeons, frigate birds, hornbills, a pair of spectacled caiman alligators, green iguanas and different species of fish, snakes and threatened birds.

What makes Crocolandia more attractive is the tour-lecture for visitors, according to park manager Mary Jane Catacutan.



THE NOW famous residents of Crocolandia showing themselves up.

PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

"We don't just delight the visitors with our animals and the amenities we offer but we also educate them. This is the very important role we perform because we want to impart to them the importance of these animals, how we should treat them. In this way, people will have a better understanding and appreciation of the animals, their needs and importance," Catacutan said.

The conservation center has 28 saltwater crocodiles and five freshwater Philippine crocodiles.

The saltwater crocodiles (*Crocodylus porosos*) live in the Indo-Pacific areas and are mostly found in large rivers and lakes. They can grow as long as 23 feet. They have relatively large heads and heavy snouts with pairs of raised ridges.

Hunters

In Crocolandia, the saltwater crocodiles are confined in an enclosure or pond with a depth of at least two feet and surrounded by a five-foot fence. They are fed at least two dead chickens twice a week.

During feeding time, chicken parts are attached to a pole. A park employee produces a clicking sound to alert the reptiles of their meal. The crocodiles then emerge from their nest house or pond and jump to the pole, to the delight of the audience.

At times, Catacutan, a biology graduate, said live chicken or cats were served to reorient the crocodiles of their behavior as hunters. However, visitors, especially children, are not encouraged to witness this kind of feeding so as not to traumatize them, she said.

Aloha and Showgirl, both 10-feet long and offsprings of Lapu-Lapu and Magellan, are known for their friendly gestures. Aloha got her name because she is fond of greeting people by placing a lily on top of her head, while Showgirl goes near the fence and wiggles her tail, Catacutan said.

"They are not at all bad. They are quiet animals; they only harm humans if they are threatened or provoked," she said.

Catacutan said the park has not only gained popularity among Talisaynons but also attracted non-Cebuanos and even foreigners.

The park manager said they could accommodate as many as 50 visitors a day. During peak season from August to March, students on field trips from different schools in Cebu, Bohol and Mindanao flock to the park.

The visitors are not only entertained by the up close and personal encounters with the crocodiles but with other species as well.

Shy type

Park assistant Rea Bacordo said they also have five Philippine crocodiles (*Crocodylus mindorensin*) which are as long as 10 feet and are smaller than the saltwater crocodiles.

These types of crocodiles are endemic in the country and are now considered rare and endangered, she said.

"What makes the Philippine crocodiles different from the others is they are much smaller and shy. They are not as aggressive compared to the others. In fact, in the Cordillera, the people there can share the river with the crocodiles without being harmed. Now, they are rare and endangered because many kill them out of fear and some (kill them) for food," Bacordo said.

According to Chris Banks, an Australian researcher, the Philippine crocodile is recognized as the most threatened crocodile in the world.

One of his significant findings revealed that the number of adult Philippine crocodiles in the world is less than 100 with remnants found in central and eastern Mindanao based on a 1998 consensus.

Two centers breed the Philippine crocodiles in the country. One is at the Silliman University in Negros Oriental and the other at the Palawan Wildlife and Rescue Conservation Center in Puerto Princesa City.

Bacordo said Crocolandia stopped breeding crocodiles for the past eight years due to limited enclosures and the absence of a hatchery. Only 15 ponds are available now.

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Stop hitting us, Comelec tells Namfrel

By Martin Marfil

THE COMMISSION on Elections yesterday told the National Movement for Free Elections to stop criticizing the poll body as a pre-condition to approving Namfrel's bid for accreditation.

"Aside from convincing us on why we should allow it to conduct its own vote count, Namfrel from now on has to refrain from assailing the Comelec's efforts and prove that it is there to help us," Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos said.

Abalos disclosed the "petty" condition yesterday, saying that before the hearing on Thursday the Comelec was already prepared to accredit Namfrel for the vote count.

"But this was before I stumbled into the fact that one of our staunchest detractors was still a member of Namfrel," he said in a press statement.

"(Namfrel) chair Joe Concepcion has told me that (Augusto) Lagman is no longer with Namfrel. This assurance has allowed me to be more comfortable in dealing with Namfrel once again... Now, however, you cannot blame me for apprehensions that some individuals or groups may sabotage the automation of elections if only to make their prophecies self-fulfilling," he said.

Abalos earlier said that Namfrel would not be accredited to do a quick count but changed his tune after President Macapagal-Arroyo issued a statement saying she hoped that the group would be accredited.

Abu is Army chief

MAJ. GEN. Efren L. Abu, the ground commander during the failed Oakwood mutiny in Makati City on July 27, is the new Philippine Army chief.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, Armed Forces of the Philippines vice chief of staff, said Abu's competence in keeping a tight lid on the mutiny was likely the main factor President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed him the Army's 45th commander.

Abu, erstwhile Army vice commander, takes over from Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling who is retiring today.

"His being ground commander (during the Oakwood incident) was an added dimension to his many other accomplishments," Garcia said.

Abu, a member of Class 1972 of the Philippine Military Academy, was one of the officers who received awards from the President for quelling the rebellion. *TJ Burgonio*

Teodoro gives up NPC leadership in House

TO DISPEL the notion that the 62-strong Nationalist People's Coalition bloc in the House of Representatives only did the bidding of its founder, businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr., his nephew Rep. Gilberto Teodoro Jr. has resigned as head of the NPC congressional delegation.

In a caucus Thursday evening, the NPC accepted Teodoro's long-standing offer to quit.

"With the experience we had in the impeachment, it has become apparent that all the moves by Teodoro are being unjustly equated as moves of Mr. Cojuangco," said NPC spokesperson Rep. Francis Escudero (Sorsogon).

"I am putting the party's interest over and above myself," Teodoro said. "It would be for the NPC's greater good that I give way."

Anyway, "the party has a deep bench of leaders," he added.

Escudero said Rep. Alfredo Maranon Jr. (Negros Occidental) has been designated new head of the NPC bloc in the House.

Maranon is a senior NPC lawmaker currently serving his third and last term.

The NPC bloc had led the move to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., which critics like Sen. Joker Arroyo had charged was Cojuangco's attempt to enfeeble the Supreme Court where he has pending cases. *Carlito Pablo*

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MJ convicted: 2 years in jail, $1.2M in fines

From page A1

was disqualified by the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal last March, a ruling the HRET confirmed in June, he is still officially listed in the House rolls as being on "official mission."

He was "voluntarily" extradited to the United States on Dec. 26, after a long legal struggle that involved petitions before the Supreme Court.

In the House, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. immediately said his chamber will move to drop the lawmaker from its rolls.

Houseseat vacant

"We can now move to declare his seat vacant," De Venecia said, noting that Jimenez's conviction meant that it has now become impossible for him to return to Manila, at least before the 2004 elections, to reclaim his seat in the 6th district of Manila.

"It (Jimenez's seat) will be up for grabs in next year's elections," De Venecia said.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon, a lawyer, said that because Jimenez has been detained in Florida for almost a year now, he "may be back before we know it."

Drilon said he expects that Jimenez "will be given credit during the period of his detention while he was awaiting trial."

"While you are awaiting trial and you are under detention, that period that you were under detention would be considered either fully or partially as part of the period that you will serve for your sentence," he told reporters.

Asked whether Jimenez could still run for public office when he returns home, Drilon said he was unsure.

No comment

At a press briefing in Angono, Rizal, President Macapagal-Arroyo declined to comment on Jimenez's conviction.

"I would not like to react to that because the process is not yet over. There is still a period of appeal and it's an American court so I would really rather not make a reaction this time," the President said.

Malacañang is in Manila's 6th district.

Receives salary, perks

US prosecutors had said that Jimenez made about $41,500 in illegal contributions and caused false information to be submitted to the Federal Election Commission. US law forbids foreigners from making contributions to election campaigns.

Jimenez used money from his Miami company and a closely related company to reimburse employees for illegal donations to President Bill Clinton and other Democrats. He moved back to the Philippines after Clinton was caught up in a series of fund-raising scandals.

On TV last night, he admitted that he still receives his salary and the perks of a congressman, such as pork barrel funds. "*Eh congressman pa naman ako* (But I'm still a congressman)," he said.

De Venecia's inaction

But a political rival of Jimenez's, former Rep. Sandy Ocampo, blamed De Venecia for failing to act on the HRET ruling.

Ocampo, who occupied Jimenez's seat for three terms, said she was bitter toward De Venecia for not removing Jimenez from the roster.

Ocampo said she went to De Venecia's house three weeks ago to remind him of the ruling but De Venecia reportedly did not want to act on it.

With finality

"The Speaker told me, '*mahirap kalaban si Mark Jimenez* (Fighting Jimenez is problematic).' He said he was afraid that Mark might do a Nani Perez, you know, discredit the Speaker. That's why I have some bitterness against the Speaker. He's too much of a politician," Ocampo told the INQUIRER over the phone.

Already, 56 congressmen have moved to implement the HRET ruling after De Venecia failed to act on it.

The HRET, composed of three Supreme Court justices and six congressmen, has denied with finality Jimenez's motions for reconsideration.

On June 5, 2003, the order became final and executory, and was recorded in the book of Entries of Judgment. Copies of the decision were furnished to the Office of the President, the House through the Speaker, and the Commission on Audit.

Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra said many members of the House were shocked to learn that there was partial release of the allotment intended for fiscal year 2003 for Jimenez.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina, also an HRET member, said he could not understand why Jimenez continued to receive funds for projects of his district.

On his possible expulsion from Congress, he told GMA's Front Page last night: "*Bahala na ang batas, nasa Supreme Court na ang kaso ko* (Let the law take its course, my case is already with the Supreme Court)."

Moral lesson

Taking the high road, Jimenez, 56, said he hoped his guilty plea would serve as "a moral lesson in my country where political corruption is frequently alleged but rarely admitted.

His lawyer in Manila, Ed Escueta, issued a statement which read in part, "If Congressman Jimenez pleaded guilty, it's for an offense involving the gift of money for a cause he believes in, and not for taking money as some in the Philippines are accused of."

Escueta said Jimenez told him over the phone that he would like "to continue serving the people of Manila, and the entire Filipino people if called upon, after he completes his sentence."

Aside from illegal campaign donations, Jimenez also admitted before the US court to using an Uruguayan company to funnel a tax-free $5 million out of the United States.

Jimenez's defense lawyer, David Markus, told the court that Jimenez already has been debriefed by the government on claims that his former corporate tax attorney Mitchell Fuerst committed misconduct by coordinating the tax evasion.

A call for comment to Fuerst's office was not immediately returned.

Net worth

Markus said Jimenez has been falsely called one of the richest men in the world. Jimenez estimated his net worth at $2.5 million before learning last month about a $16-million bankruptcy court judgment against him for the collapse of one of his companies.

Markus also challenged a probation report that he said falsely implied Jimenez was involved in the corruption that forced Estrada from office in 2001.

The defense also unsuccessfully tried to remove a reference to a Philippine investigation into vote-buying allegations, which resulted in no charges. The report said 17 people were arrested for offering coupons to be redeemed by Jimenez voters for cash.

Jimenez gave contributions to Clinton, US Senators Edward Kennedy and Robert Torricelli, US Senate candidates Roger Bedford in Alabama and Thomas Strickland in Colorado, and US House candidate Ann Henry in Arkansas from 1994 to 1996. *With reports from Christine Avendaño, Juliet Javellana, Philip Tubeza; AP*

Verdict of US judge: Evidence inconsistent

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE CONFLICTING statements of the Philippine government's witnesses were enough for US District Court Judge Gregory Hollows to deny the extradition of murder suspect Rod Strunk.

In his 37-page decision, Judge Hollows called the government's evidence "a tangled web of accusation followed by supplementation, and sometimes even further supplementation without regard to consistency of accusation" which were not enough to link Strunk to the murder of his wife Nida Blanca.

"The evidence submitted by the Philippines concerning Strunk's participation in the murder of Blanca is so inconsistent and conflicting that it provides little competent evidence to support the conclusion that Strunk hired (witness Philip) Medel to murder Blanca," Hollows said in the decision.

Furthermore, Hollows said that the government's evidence alone was enough to deny Strunk's extradition.

"It is not critical at this point to weigh Strunk's evidence since that submitted by the Philippines when viewed as a whole does not impart a reasonable belief in Strunk's complicity," his decision read.

He later added that what dealt the final blow to the case "that was already on the ground" was the competent and admissible evidence submitted by Strunk.

But Hollows also said that he is not discounting the possibility that Strunk could still be extradited "should new, competent evidence be submitted."

Gutierrez, Demetriou...

From page A1

Demetriou should share the blame since she had worked closely with the investigators from the start of the case, according to Gutierrez.

Scapegoat

Demetriou retorted that Gutierrez "should not make me a scapegoat for the DOJ's failure to extradite Strunk. I had nothing to do with the preparation of the extradition application.

"It was a joint undertaking of the Philippine government and the US government pursuant to the extradition treaty forged between the two countries," Demettriou said.

In a press conference, a visibly agitated Gutierrez noted that, "The preparation of the documents in support of the request (for exradition) was (done) even with the help of Justice Demetriou so we are wondering why (she) is saying that the evidence presented was insufficient. She was with our lawyers here in the DOJ."

NBI delay

Demteriou said that it was the DOJ which sought her assistance to obtain some documents submitted during the investigation of the case because of the repeated failure and refusal of the Director of the National Bureau of Investigation Reynaldo Wycoco to submit all the sworn statements and other pieces of evidence in his possession.

"She has no right to blame me for her failure because I am not and was not ever a member of the DOJ extradition panel since I am not an official of the DOJ," Demetriou countered.

Why only now?

NBI Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz said the bureau, through the National Capital Region, had tried previously to get Demetriou to tell them what documents she was referring to.

"Maybe if she had shown (the documents) to us earlier, then we could have presented them before the court when the case was still being heard," he told reporters yesterday.

Diaz sounded irked when asked to react to Demetriou's scheduled press conference on Monday at Blanca's gravesite at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina, where she would come out with evidence of the DOJ and the NBI's "negligence."

"With an ally like her, who needs enemies?" the Interpol chief asked, pointing out that it is actually the NBI and the DOJ who are actively seeking Strunk's extradition to the Philippines.

Blame US court

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said that if Kaye wanted to blame someone for the denial of Strunk's extradition, then she should blame the US court.

Wycoco said the same US court that issued the arrest warrant against Strunk after finding probable cause also denied his extradition to the country.

"Inconsistent, isn't it? It's the Philippine government that is helping Kaye," he said.

Drilon dismayed

A dismayed Senate President Franklin Drilon also questioned "the quality of the investigative work and the evidence presented, which "did not pass the standard of the US judge."

"There is an obvious reliance on testimony, which is not a very good technique, because testimonies can change," Drilon said at a news conference. "Forensic evidence is something that we should be able to rely more on."

Drilon said the DOJ could file for another extradition request but this should be backed with additional evidence.

In a statement, Drilon said the decision of the US court would "put the Philippine justice system in a bad light."

No effect on trial here

Gutierrez said that the US decision would have no effect on the ongoing Blanca murder trial in the Pasig Regional Trial Court. She added that the ruling of the Pasig court should not be doubted just because the California court junked Strunk's extradition.

"We will not allow a (foreign) court to make those comments about our evidence that was also presented in our courts, which found that there is a case against Mr. Strunk," she said.

Gutierrez said the Pasig Regional Trial Court has even found enough evidence to issue an arrest warrant against Strunk.

Basis for extradition bid

"We proved that there is enough evidence so the warrant was issued. It was this warrant that became our basis to file the extradition request. And when we asked the extradition court for (Strunk's) provisional arrest on the basis of the warrant, Mr. Strunk was ordered arrested. That means there is really basis for his extradition. So the DOJ should not be blamed. We did our part," she said.

Our US lawyers were also convinced that the evidence we presented was enough to bring back Mr. Strunk," she said.

She also warned the parties involved in the case not to make irresponsible statements about the evidence in the case since it is still "sub judice."

No communication

Gutierrez said Demetriou was aware of the evidence that the government submitted to the US extradition court, adding that she and others from the camp of Kaye Torres have not talked to DOJ officials to ask about what really happened.

"There is no communication. We heard their comments only from the media. Not one of them talked to us about what really happened," Gutierrez said.

Appealable

Gutierrez said US Legal Attache Jeffrey Cole has informed the DOJ that the decision of the California judge could be appealed. She said the government could file a new extradition request.

Gutierrez also said that the DOJ would look into the culpability of Strunk's local lawyers for the undertaking he issued before he left for the US in January 2002 to tend to his ailing mother. In that undertaking, Strunk had promised to return to the Philippines but did not.

She said the DOJ would look if there was "deceit" in the Strunk undertaking to return to the country and if his lawyers were involved.

"I think they should also answer for the undertaking that allowed Strunk to leave. (If not for the undertaking,) maybe we would not have gone through all this trouble. Maybe we would not have this statement coming from a foreign court that the evidence is insufficient when we are still conducting trial here in the Philippines," Gutierrez said.

NBI Agent Rosauro Bautista, who had gone to Sacramento, California to present the bureau's evidence on the Blanca murder case, yesterday said the NBI had been faithful in presenting all the documents that US prosecutors had asked for. *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

GMA offered to send Erap to US, Satur claims

From page A1

idea for unity in the country," Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

GMA's call

But Tiglao emphasized that it was not Ms Macapagal's call to decide whether Estrada will be allowed to go abroad or not.

"It's within the realm of the justice system. It's the sole prerogative of the Sandiganbayan and she cannot push it," Tiglao said.

The President's reconciliation initiative continued yesterday to reap a harvest of skepticism, but Ms Macapagal found an unlikely ally in opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

Pimentel rebuked Senators Joker Arroyo and Edgardo Angara for shooting down the plan. "For once, let's try to have (a positive outlook)," said Pimentel. "Why, *wala na bang matinong ginagawa si Gloria* (Isn't Gloria capable of doing anything good)?"

Formidable threat

Ocampo said that Estrada, facing plunder charges before the anti-graft court, remained the most formidable threat to the President, which is why, he said, she was determined to get him out of the way.

"Estrada can still coax thousands of his supporters to flood the streets and scare Macapagal stiff," he said. "More so, he could be the key factor in the emergence of a united opposition presidential candidate."

Ocampo also noted the accommodation given to Estrada when he was allowed to stay at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center instead of a regular detention cell and allowed to make personal visits to relatives.

"Clearly, President Macapagal, who has broken her own word by running for election, will do just about anything—even violate the law and break the people's trust—just to serve her political ambitions," he said.

Estrada is currently detained at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal.

Ocampo said national reconciliation and unity can only be based on justice and that special treatment for Estrada would not help promote true healing and peace.

Charged atmosphere

Pimentel said the highly charged political atmosphere was "still redeemable."

"With the right attitude, there's no reason why politicians can't work together despite differences in opinion for the good of the nation," said Pimentel, who stressed that the plan could be construed as a "truce" from endless political bickering, and could "maximize the things that we can do positively for the nation before the actual electoral battle begins."

Good faith

Asked whether he believed that the President meant well in proposing the reconciliation plan, he said: "I think we are to credit her with good faith."

However, Pimentel said that at the same time, members of the political opposition should "keep our eyes open for any treachery" on the part of the President and her men.

Guingona

Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. also rued the criticism the reconciliation initiative has met.

Guingona said it was unfortunate that the administration's readiness to achieve what it calls "principled reconciliation" with various political groups has been met with little enthusiasm, if not outright distrust and derision.

"Today, the crying and urgent need is not only for national unity and reconciliation but the return of civility among our leaders and a reservoir of goodwill and trust," he said.

But the Vice President said such conditions "cannot be demanded and turned on like light switches" but are "developed and strengthened over time."

Business leaders themselves are sharply divided over the plan.

Former Central Bank Governor Jose Cuisia said he was not in favor of the President's move to extend a hand of reconciliation to Estrada, San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. and the Marcos family.

"It will send the wrong message (that) no matter how grave a crime you commit, you can get away with if you make a lot of trouble for the government," Cuisia said.

Industrialist Raul T. Concepcion said businessmen generally support a reconciliatory strategy but only as a broad government policy and not as a special approach to solve specific cases of individuals or groups.

'Highly political'

Concepcion said the President's decision to seek a full term next year has made her a "highly political person." Concepcion suggested that the President instead focus on generalities rather than specifics to avoid being accused of bias.

But Federation of Philippine Industries president Jesus Arranza said his group supported the President's bid to reach an accord among all sectors in society. And Employers Confederation of the Philippines chair Donald Dee said his group was supportive of the President's reconciliatory stance. "It is good because we need harmony to ensure progress for our country."

Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce Inc. executive vice president Francis Chua said the plan was a gesture of statesmanship. "A real reconciliation of all politicians is what our nation needs," he added.

Other reactions

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said that direct reconciliation should be made with the poor, not with the rich political few.

"Who is she reconciling with?" Rosales asked.

Rep. Monico Puentevella of Bacolod City said reconciliation was always a two-way street and that it would be difficult to reconcile with those who think they were better than the President.

"It is better for the President to concentrate on small people who have big hearts than those big people with misguided hearts," he said.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo said the time was ripe for reconciliation. "We should not mind other politicians who refuse to recognize this urgent need," he said.

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan urged incoming Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines president Archbishop Fernando Capalla to withdraw his commitment to help in the total reconciliation program, because "GMA's intentions are self-serving."

Risky

In Malacañang, the President's deputy spokesperson admitted that the plan was "highly risky" but said the President was undeterred by the skepticism and mockery that met her proposal.

Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo said it was repeatedly stressed during the Nov. 11 special Cabinet meeting that the plan was "fraught with great complexities and difficulties."

"At the meeting there were concerns expressed about the challenge of undertaking reconciliation while pursuing justice in the courts and amid a bruising election contest, among other issues," Saludo said.

"That this enterprise will be highly risky and demanding is confirmed by the reactions of various individuals and sectors to the President's call for reconciliation," Saludo said.

But he said it was a "source of hope and inspiration" that the President and her Cabinet were "one in the conviction that national reconciliation must be pursued." *With reports from Juliet Javellana, Jerome Aning, Gil Cabacungan, Margaux Ortiz, Martin Marfil*

Erap denies striking deal with GMA

By Armand Nocum

"THERE'S no truth to it. How can that happen when I did not even talk to President Macapagal-Arroyo?"

Deposed President Joseph Estrada yesterday branded as outright speculation Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo's claim that he and Malacañang had struck a deal.

It's a rumor from a "communist animal," Estrada said.

The former actor, who voted to throw US military bases out of the country when he was in the Senate, admitted that he did ask the government to allow him to go to the United States for knee surgery.

"But I have made it clear that after my operation, I will be allowed to return in time for the campaign period maybe in January," he said.

He added that no representative from the President came to him to offer the settlement, which may be read as an attempt to keep him away during the campaign and the election.

"If I go abroad it is only to have my knees operated on. Other than that, I don't want to be away for a long time, especially with the election approaching. If they will bring to me such a proposal, I will ask that I be allowed to come home immediately to campaign for whoever is chosen as the presidential bet of the opposition," Estrada said.

In a telephone interview, Estrada admitted that it was not for him to choose the opposition candidate. He would just abide by the opposition's choice, he said.

Estrada also said he would not likely agree to enter into any deal with the Palace unless it proceeds with the filing of graft charges against Cabinet members involved in irregularities.

"How can there be reconciliation if they maintain this double standard of justice? How can I reconcile if these people are not judged in court?"

FOUR DIGIT
1 9 0 1
(In exact order)

SUERTRES
9 6 3

MEGALOTTO 6/45
6 13 22 32 33 38

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Mayors ban tinted windows on PUVs

By Margaux Ortiz

METRO Manila mayors yesterday approved a resolution banning tinted windows and curtains on public utility vehicles to control the rising robbery incidents on PUVs.

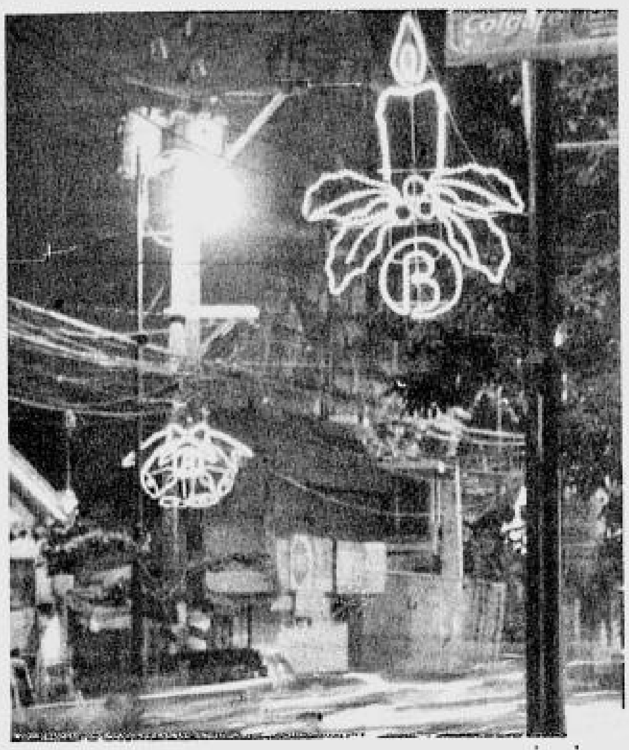
Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said PUVs will now have to comply with the resolution or risk a P500 fine.

He added that apprehended vehicles will also be impounded and the tint on their windows will be scraped.

"Removing obstructions that block law enforcers' view from the outside would ensure the safety of passengers on buses, taxi cabs and FX taxis," Vergel de Dios said.

The resolution is based on a 1978 measure which prohibited the use of tinted glass, blinds, curtains and any device that would obstruct the view of a vehicle's interior.

The same memorandum allowed the tinting of the upper portions of the windshield and rear windows, "provided that such tinting will not exceed six inches in width for heavy and light vehicles, or four inches for bantam vehicles."



XMAS PA'B'TIN
A letter passing itself off as part of some grand Christmas design can be seen lighting up broad stretches of Makati City, like the ones on J.P. Rizal Street, reminding us that the holidays—and the election year—is just around the corner. EDWIN BACASMAS

QC REAL PROPERTY TAX

SB vetoes amnesty

By Tina Santos

GOODBYE tax relief.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano "Sonny" Belmonte has vetoed a proposed ordinance granting a one-time real property tax amnesty on delinquent payers.

Belmonte told the INQUIRER that an amnesty would be unfair to those who religiously pay their real property taxes on time, as well as to those who have entered into a compromise agreement to pay their tax liabilities.

He explained that delinquent taxpayers who would benefit from the proposed ordinance would be given concessions not enjoyed by responsible citizens.

The ordinance, which was introduced by 15 councilors led by 4th district councilor Jesus Manuel Suntay, aimed to ease the financial burden of people with outstanding tax liabilities.

Had Belmonte not blocked the ordinance, inept taxpayers would have been freed from paying penalties and surcharges.

The mayor disclosed that several real property owners have already entered into agreements to settle their tax liabilities, albeit through installment.

"Delinquent taxpayers would be exempted from paying the penalties and surcharges, how about those who have future installments, those who have already recognized their obligation? I believe that's unfair to them. And besides only a few people would benefit from the amnesty," he said.

Furthermore, he pointed out that past city administrations initiated similar moves but failed to get the desired results.

"Past administrations had a bad experience with tax amnesties," he said.

"Besides," he added, "it has a very minuscule effect to tax collection. Worse, collection declined the following year after the ordinance took effect."

Belmonte also noted that the one-time 100-percent relief on interest and penalties on delinquent real property taxpayers would run contrary to the basic principle of taxation that it must be equitable.

According to the proponents of the measure, unpaid real property taxes, including penalties, have reached P10.7 billion over the last few years.

The mayor said that he already issued an executive order canceling the auction of properties which was scheduled for next month.

"The councilors were saying that we should be considerate enough not to hold the auction during the Christmas season, so I told them I would cancel it, and I did. I think that's easier than to give way to the amnesty ordinance," he said.

What gastroenteritis? It's dengue that is bugging Valenzuela residents

By Edson Tandoc Jr.

THE THREAT of gastroenteritis and cholera hitting northern Metro Manila is of little concern to Valenzuela City, which is more worried about the rising cases of dengue fever.

As of yesterday, reported dengue cases in the city this year reached 424.

The city remains under a month-long, City Council-declared state of calamity over the "dengue outbreak."

Thirteen new cases were recorded in the first week of November, city health officer Antonio Olegario has told the INQUIRER. In October, 74 cases were reported.

However, Olegario said the spread of the mosquito-borne disease appeared to be slowing down.

According to him, the declaration of a state of calamity has allowed barangay officials to buy fumigation machines to combat the insects.

But Olegario said their battle against dengue was far from over. Yesterday, city doctors met with city Mayor Bobbit Carlos to plan their next move.

METROBRIEFS

Woman goes into labor in jail

ALONA Mancinido almost gave birth inside the Makati City police detention cell hours after she and another pregnant companion were arrested at the Landmark department store for allegedly stealing children's clothes on Thursday. Police rushed Mancinido to a nearby clinic after her water bag broke inside the cell at around midnight yesterday. PO2 Ricky Mel Corpuz said lawmen waited with Mancinido's husband at the clinic while the woman labored for eight hours. After giving birth to a boy, police took her back to detention. Corpuz said Mancinido and Annabel Marabe, both in their late 20s, were caught with P7,000 worth of children's pajamas and denim pants. Landmark officials yesterday took pity on the women and decided not to file charges, Corpuz said. Mancinido and Marabe were freed at around 3:30 p.m. *Margaux Ortiz*

2 WPD cops sacked

PO2 CHRISTOPHER Villaluz and PO2 Peter Gonzales may no longer flash their badges again after the People's Law Enforcement Board of Manila found them guilty of grave misconduct. Villaluz and Gonzales, last detailed at the Western Police District Station 10 in Pandacan, have been dismissed from service for wrongfully arresting the husband of Milagros Garcia on Feb. 4. The two lawmen allegedly dragged the man out of his house in Sampaloc, Manila, poked their guns at him and took his necklace, Garcia said. PLEB stenographer Ruben Batac said that Villaluz and Gonzales have a list of administrative cases under their names. *Tarra Quismundo*

Drunk and dead

ABRAHAM Bersabi, 30, was stabbed to death by his uncle during a drinking spree in Pasig City Thursday night. Bersabi, of San Isidro Street in Barangay Pinedea, died while undergoing treatment at the Rizal Medical Center, police said. Dionisio Pabillo, who lived with the victim, fled after the stabbing. Police said the two men got into a fight during a drinking bout in front of their house at 10:45 p.m. *Luige del Puerto*

Lawman under fire

PO1 RALPH Nicart has been relieved of his post after he was accused of robbing Juanito Roldan, 50, in Quezon City Thursday night. Supt. Cesar Hawthorne Binag of the Central Police District yesterday ordered the filing of criminal charges against Nicart. Police said Roldan, of Barangay Obrero, also accused Nicart of trying to plant a plastic sachet of shabu on the victim. Nicart reportedly told Roldan that he was under surveillance for drug pushing and allegedly took his cell phone. *Tina Santos*

A dose of their own medicine

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

A US judge threw out the extradition case against Rod Lauren Strunk, principal suspect in the murder of his wife, Nida Blanca, saying the case against him lacked "probable cause."

But probably the real reason is that the US judge didn't want an American citizen tried by a foreign court. The United States is very protective of its citizens even when they commit crimes in other countries.

After all, where did this famous statement come from: "He may be a son of a b***h, but he's still our son of a b***h?"

* * *

So, the next time a Filipino citizen accused of a crime in the United States seeks refuge here and the US asks for his extradition, we know what to do.

It's not fair that we easily give in to US requests for extradition of persons charged in their courts, while they give us a hard time on our request for extradition of persons charged in our courts.

From now on, it should be tit for tat.

* * *

Imagine, we immediately acceded to the US request to extradite Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez!

But what is the US doing to our request to have Charlie "Atong" Ang brought back to the country to face charges? The US is dilly-dallying.

Let's give the Americans a dose of their own medicine. That way, they will treat us with respect.

* * *

I remember an anecdote my Old Man told me about Brig. Gen. Vicente Lim in dealing with an arrogant American sergeant before the Pacific War.

Lim, a West Point graduate, was not saluted by the US sergeant who passed him by even if he was wearing a colonel's insignia. The reason was apparent: the sergeant didn't have much respect for Filipino officers.

Lim called the American sergeant to his office and ordered him to salute his cap with the colonel's insignia on it. The cap was hung on the wall.

After the US sergeant complied with the order, Lim told him that it was not him but his rank that the sergeant should respect.

* * *

It's understandable to grieve over the death of former Air Transportation Office chief Panfilo Villaruel.

People who knew Villaruel when he was ATO chief will tell you he was one of the most honest chief of that powerful office.

But treating him like a martyr—for seizing the control tower at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and voicing his sentiments against the government—is not only going too far. It's outrageous.

* * *

The senators looking into last Saturday's incident want to know why Villaruel's face was deformed and his arm riddled with bullets.

I have a limited knowledge about guns and ammunition, but I learned that a .223 caliber bullet (Armalite or M-16 ammunition) is very destructive. So destructive that when it hits a human body, it tumbles inside, blowing off chunks of flesh.

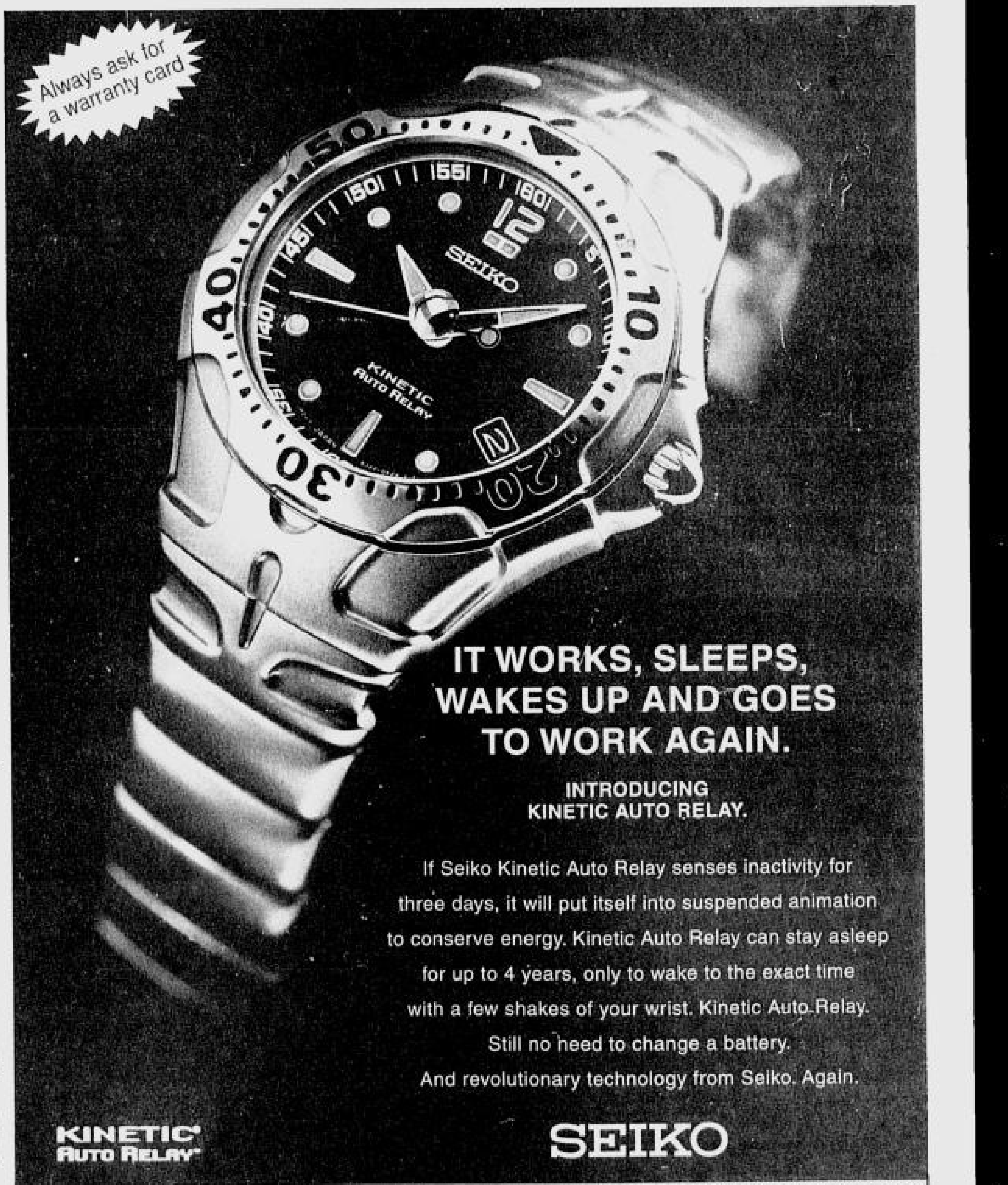
Obviously, members of the SWAT team were armed with M-16 rifles when they assaulted the control tower.

* * *

Why did Villaruel and Catchillar suffer multiple hits?

That can be explained. How many members were there in the SWAT team? Let's put the number at five. Five SWAT men pumping two bullets each on Villaruel and Catchillar, would make 10 bullets for each of the two targets.

But in the heat of the moment, there could have been more bullets fired by each member of the SWAT team at Villaruel and Catchillar. In the heat of combat, a combatant loses count of bullets he fires from his gun. Ask any soldier who's had combat experience.



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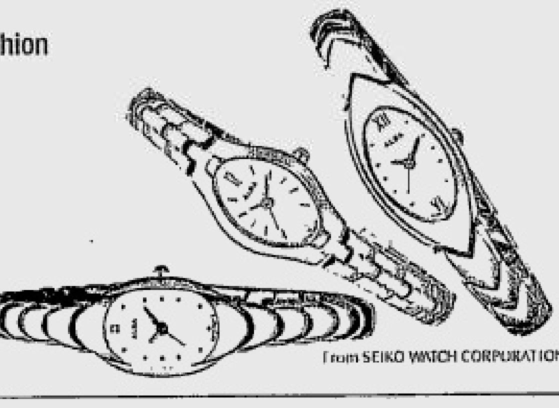

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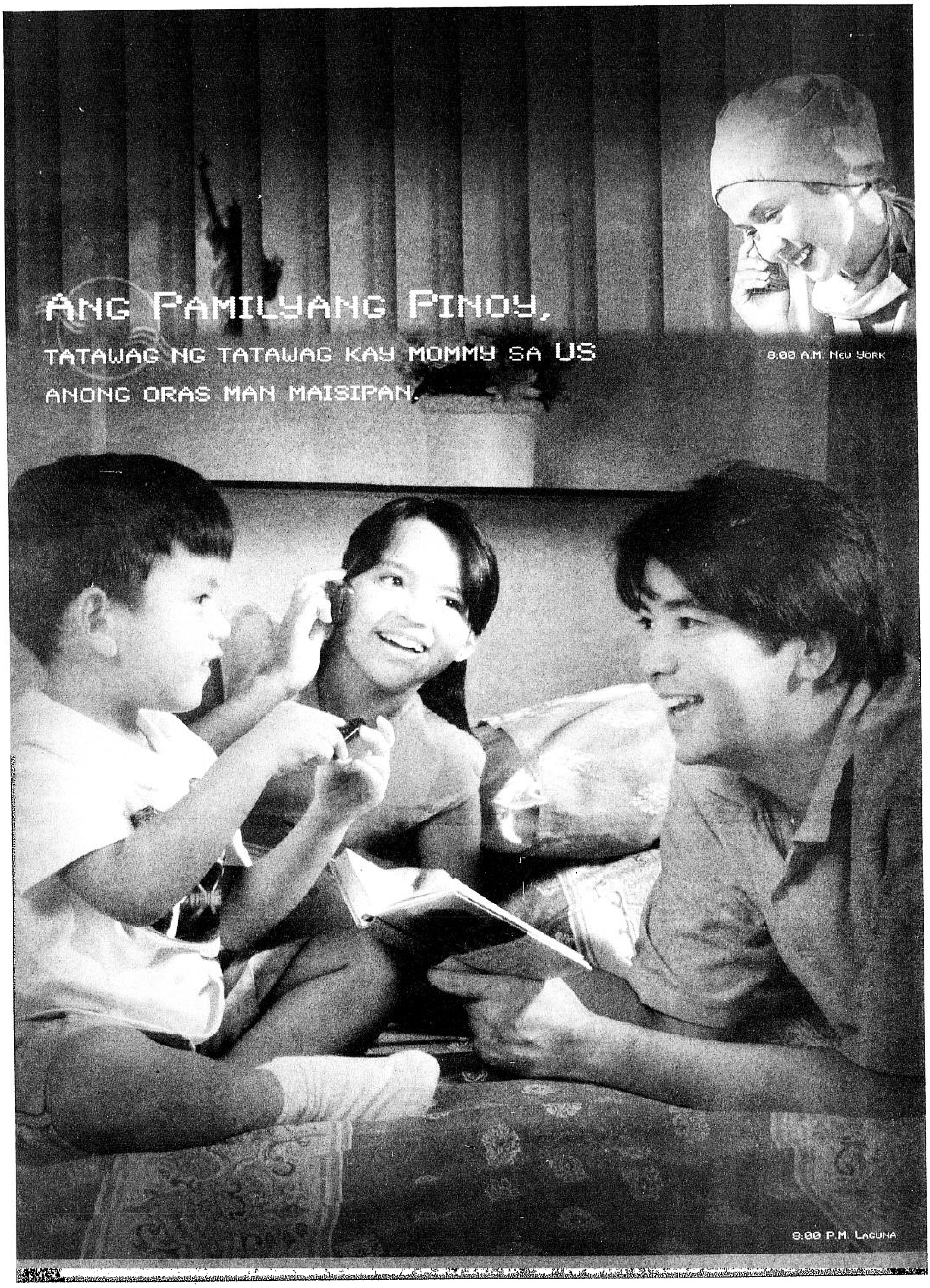

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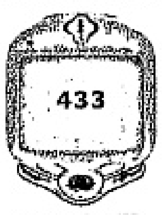
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Compiled by L. Mangulat

BASKETBALL: NBA Action; 8:30 a.m. (r-8:30 p.m.); ESPN—Catch the week's NBA news and highlights in this half-hour program.
NBA-Spurs vs Sixers; 9 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); ESPN; Suns vs Rockets; 9:30 a.m. (r-8 p.m.); Solar Sports—Defending champion San Antonio doesn't expect to get friendly treatment as they visit the City of Brotherly Love.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

Pacquiao win-win plan a secret

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

MANNY Pacquiao, swearing he would capitalize on Marco Antonio Barrera's weaknesses, yesterday said he has perfected a win-win battle plan.

He, however, kept mum when asked to bare specifics of his fight strategy.

"They are confidential," Pacquiao maintained yesterday on the eve of the official weigh-in for the Clash of the Titans promotion at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas.

The most Pacquiao could say was that his strategy would all depend on what style Barrera brings to the ring tomorrow.

Barrera, in contrast, has informed that, for the Pacquiao fight, he has been working on a lot of head movements and defense techniques.

"Pacquiao is really strong, a very good fighter, very tough" Barrera admitted.

Unlike in other major championship cards, no trash talk is expected in today's weigh-in.

Instead, the two main protagonists will most likely make a pitch for one great fight.

"I am going to pray to God that nobody will get hurt in this excellent night of boxing. I have no predictions, but I promise I will do my best to win this fight," Pacquiao was quoted as saying by Fightnews.

Meanwhile, Dionisia Pacquiao, mother of the IBF superbantam boss, wants her son to know that, although she will not be at ringside tomorrow, she'll be at the cheering vanguard.

"I know my son Manny will come home very triumphant. My gut-feel says so. And I've never been wrong in that department," Dionisia told the INQUIRER in an interview last Sunday in Kidapawan City, where she witnessed her other son, Bobby, decision Jaime Barcelona.

Dionisia, who now lives separately with her husband, has intimated that in both of Manny's defeats—to Rustico Torrecampo in 1996 and Medgoen 3K Battery in 1999—she had felt ill days before the two bouts.

But she swore she has the highest confidence level for her son's clash with Barrera.

"My son is very strong. He's very prepared. Barrera will know that," confided Dionisia.

Pacquiao, who parades a 37-2-1 win-loss-draw record with 29 KOs, was at last reckoning a 3 1/2 to 1 underdog.

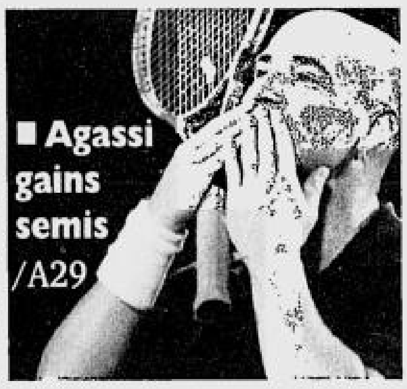
Barrera boasts of a 57-3 record with 40 KOs, and is universally recognized as the best featherweight on the planet.

Solar Sports will air the fight live this Sunday starting at 11 a.m.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Ellis pulls down Gin Kings** /A26

- **Mavs down Rockets; Wolves devour Bulls** /A28



- **Agassi gains semis** /A29

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Welcoat shoots for solo lead

WELCOAT Paints, back to its dominant ways, seeks win No. 3 and the solo lead when it battles Viva Mineral Water-FEU today in another doubleheader of the PBL Platinum Cup at the Pasay Sports Complex.

Powered by five members of the SEA Games-bound RP team, among them James Yap and Ervin Sotto, the Paint Masters could have their hands full against a young team that made the biggest impact in the previous conference by making it all the way to the finals.

Welcoat, proud owner of five titles since its breakout year in 1999, and Montana Pawnshop are currently tied for the lead with similar 2-0 win-loss cards.

Fash Liquid Detergent, which ruled the first conference, is tagged as the heavy favorite when it battles ICTSI-La Salle at 4 p.m.

The Water Force, built around the core that powered FEU to a title-sweep over Ateneo in the UAAP, has suffered back-to-back setbacks, including a 69-70 defeat to Montana last Tuesday, but coach Koy Banal has remained unfazed.

"We know how strong Welcoat is, but we have to think positive," said Banal.

STANDINGS	W	L
Montana	2	0
Welcoat	2	0
Fash Liquid	1	1
Sunkist	1	1
Blu Star	1	2
Viva Mineral	0	1
ICTSI	0	2

GAMES TODAY
(*Pasay Sports Complex*)
2 p.m.—Viva vs Welcoat
4 p.m.—Fash Liquid Detergent vs ICTSI

Freethrow dud Ellis pulls down Gin Kings

Red Bull wins, ties TNT

By June Navarro

ROSELL Ellis again flaunted his anomalous average from the freethrow line to pull down Ginebra in the ongoing Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Cuneta Astrodome last night.

Confirming his tag as the worst freethrow shooter in the series, Ellis missed all but two of his 10 foul shots, including six straight in the final period, as Barangay Ginebra fell 77-85 to Coca-Cola in Game 2 of the quarterfinal series.

The setback forced a sudden-death Game 3 on Wednesday, with the winner advancing to a best-of-five semifinal series against the winner of the Red Bull-Talk N Text quarterfinal clash.

"It's not about the game plan of the teams. It's all about the effort, energy, commitment and the desire to win the game," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

Elllis also played below his average of 26 points per game, scoring only 18. He had 22 rebounds, five assists and three steals.

On the other side of the floor, Tee McClary efficiently worked for the Tigers in offense, pouring 11 of his game-high 23 points in the last seven minutes that took the fight out of the Gin Kings.

Poch Juinio also proved instrumental for the Tigers' victory as the former UP Maroon drilled in nine points, including two three-pointers in the third period.

Juinio's heroics allowed the Tigers to overhaul a five-point deficit and grab a 63-52 advantage entering the final period.

From thereon, the Tigers exploited Ellis' poor freethrow shooting while leaning on the aggressiveness of McClary down the stretch.

Reyes said the fierce rebounding of the Tigers contributed highly to their win as they matched the Gin Kings' 51 recoveries.

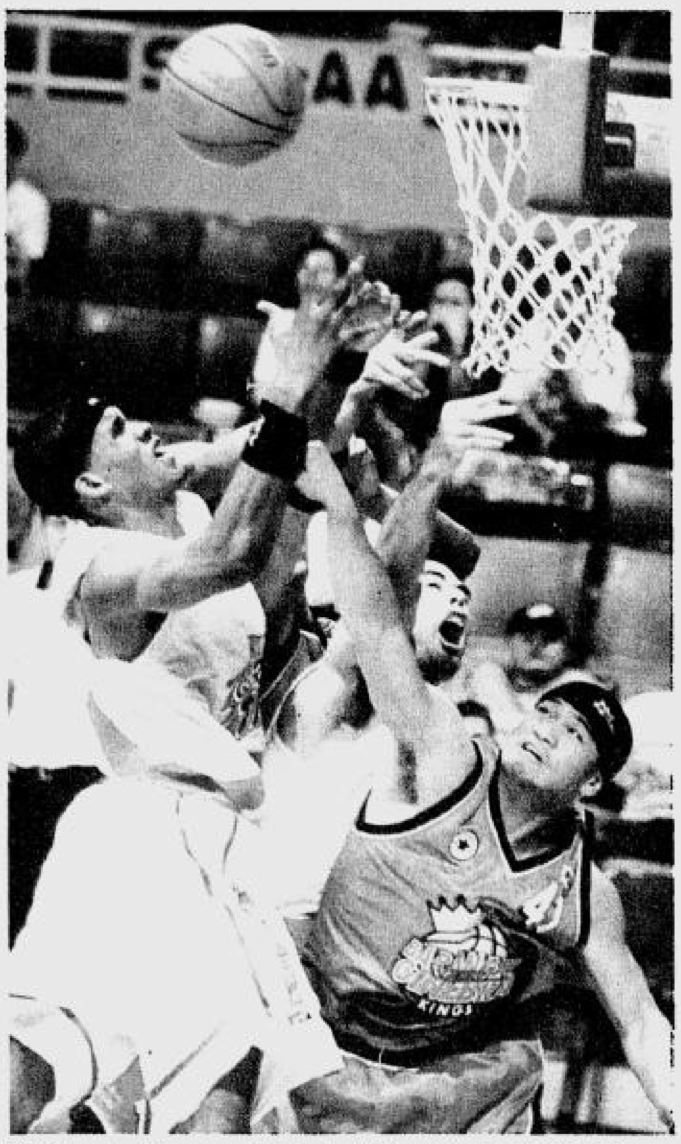
In the second game, Red Bull put up a stingy defense to defeat Talk N Text, 99-80, and force a winner-take-all-match in their separate quarterfinal series.

COCA-COLA 85—McClary 23, Juinio 14, Cariaso 12, Abarrientos 9, Reavis 7, Hatfield 7, Morano 7, Antonio 4, Hugnatan 2, Walwright 0.

GINEBRA 77—Adducul 20, Ellis 18, Caguioa 13, Dimaunahan 12, Limpot 6, Menk 4, Salvacion 2, David 2, Crisano 0.

Quarters: 15-19, 39-40, 63-52, 85-77.

GAMES SUNDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
4 p.m.—FedEx vs San Miguel Beer
6:30 p.m.—Alaska vs Sta. Lucia



IT'S a tangle of hands as Rafi Reavis (left) and Rudy Hatfield of Coca-Cola battle Mark Caguioa of Ginebra for the rebound. ROGER MARGALLO

Letran, SSC start quest to be No. 1

GAMES TODAY *(FEU Gym)*
2 p.m.—University of Manila vs. SSC
4 p.m.—Letran vs. EAC

TOP NCAA teams Letran and San Sebastian start their quest to be recognized as the country's No. 1 collegiate cage team when they play separate rivals today at the resumption of the Champions League Sweet 16 at the FEU gym.

Letran, this year's NCAA titlist, tests the equally competitive Emilio Aguinaldo College at 4 p.m. after the San Sebastian-University of Manila encounter at 2 p.m.

Ronjay Enrile, a 5-10 scoring machine, banners Letran's offense.

Reigning NCAA Most Valuable Player Leomar Najorda, on the other hand, leads the Stags' assault.

The tournament board has decided to hold the remaining Sweet 16 games at the University Belt to make the competing teams feel more at home.

Athletes raring to take off; no funds from Palace yet

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHILE the 400-plus national athletes are raring to do battle in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games, the Philippine Sports Commission is fidgeting and wondering when the P90 million budget would be released by Malacañang.

With just 20 days left before the Games start, PSC officials yesterday bared they were still waiting for the funds for the actual competition.

The funds will be used for the air fare and hotel expenses of the 449 athletes and 209 coaches, officials and technical staff in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh and Haidong.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit earlier estimated that it would cost P70,000 to send a delegation member.

Under Dayrit's computation, sending the entire delegation would cost about P46 million.

But PSC chair Eric Buhain, who guested in yesterday's SCOOP sa Kamayan, said the amount would also include equipment and uniforms of each delegation member.

Buhain also vouched for the preparedness of the athletes. He said 85 athletes from 17 sports, who have received funds from First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's foundation, have wound up training here and abroad and have been identified to win golds in the Games.

NBL PANASONIC CUP

Snipers seek 3rd win in row

TODAY'S GAMES (*Bren Z. Guiao Convention Center*)
3 p.m.—Compak-Ozamiz vs Ilocos Sur
5 p.m.—Pampanga vs MayniLA

NEWCOMER Ilocos Sur guns for its third straight win in the 2003 Panasonic-National Basketball League Regional Cup tournament today when it faces defending champion Compak Shineway-Ozamiz at the Bren Z. Guiao Convention Center in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Gametime between the Snipers and the Ozamiz cagers is 3 p.m.

Two more Luzon teams—Sulpicio-Pampanga and Restolax/Mail & More-MayniLA—clash in the 5 p.m. mainer.

Coached by Mario Quitoriano, the Snipers proved to be an early revelation, gunning down Spring Cooking Oil-San Pablo and Grachiya-Adamson in their first two outings in the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, BJ Star Logistics, Sulpicio Lines, Molten and Nature's Spring.

The Raging Bulls will parade a new lineup led by reigning MVP Dave Bautista, Welihado Duyag Jr., Marlon Tadeo, Sherwin Garcia, Gomer Bansil, Arnel Manalac and Alvin Pua.

"I think we'd be able to put up a good game against MayniLA," said new coach Lawrence Chiongson.

SHINEWAY-Ozamiz's Edgar Echavez rams into Spring-San Pablo's Rolly Menor in a recent game in Cebu. Shineway won, 93-82.

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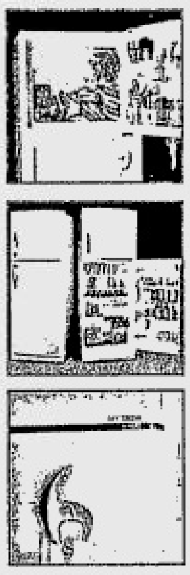

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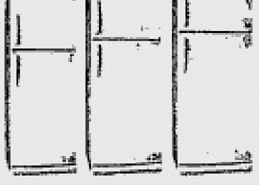

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Super-hot Pagunsan destroys opposition

PAGUNSAN: 15 shots

BAGUIO—A good game chooses neither course nor weather.

This Juvic Pagunsan found to his satisfaction as he destroyed the opposition in the small but elite championship cast with a 5-under-par 64 yesterday to win the sixth leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the well-kept Camp John Hay course here.

His margin of victory: a whopping 15 shots.

A day after coming close to the course record with a 63, the 25-year-old Pagunsan remained hot with five birdies in the last eight holes. He finished with a 36-hole total of 127.

Dave Hernandez carded a 71 for 142, the same card of Jay Bayron whom he nipped for second place on a countback.

Pagunsan thus joined his national teammates Jerome Delariarte, Marc Lopez, Tristan Tabanas and JR Tanpinco in the National Grand Finals set next year March at Mt. Malarayat in Batangas.

Delariarte topped the Forest Hills leg, Lopez ruled in Davao, Tabanas prevailed in Cagayan de Oro and Tanpinco won in Bacolod.

The Samsung Tour is co-sponsored by Mario's Restaurant, Wilson, Gatorade, Tokyo Tokyo, Microtel, Custom Clubmakers, Rogin-E and Dunlop Golf with radio stations Killer-Bee, Citylite 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and 103.5 K-Lite as media partners.

Zarate 4 shots off new leader

SHANGHAI—Overnight co-leader Danny Zarate of the Philippines salvaged a 1-under-par 71 in blustery conditions Friday to drop to a share of eighth place, four shots off the lead halfway through the $500,000 Volvo China Open.

Zarate, who shared the first-round lead with compatriot Angelo Que and China's Zhang Lianwei after a 67, totaled 138, four strokes off new leaders Choi Kwang-soo of South Korea and Adam Fraser of Australia.

Que fired a 73 to be in a five-way tie at 140.

Choi shot a course-record equaling 8-under-par 64 to power into a tie for the halfway lead with Fraser.

The 43-year-old Choi, who had a two-day total of 135, rolled in eight birdies against no bogey at the Shanghai Silport Golf Club.

Fraser birdied two of his last three holes for a 67.

Zhang settled for a 69 to lie one stroke off the pace with Scotland's Ross Bain, who produced a bogey-free 65.

Defending champion David Gleeson of Australia carded a 67 to share fifth place with Thailand's Thaworn Wiratchant and Scott Strange of Australia in the Asian PGA Tour event.

AFP

MILO LITTLE OLYMPICS

6,000 students vie for 477 golds

OVER 6,000 high school and elementary athletes gun for the 477 gold medals at stake when the 2003 Milo Little Olympics-National Capital Region unwraps today at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

A total of 459 silver and 667 bronze medals are also up for grabs in the 11 sports events—athletics, badminton, chess, football, gymnastics, swimming, sepak takraw, lawn tennis, taekwondo, table tennis and volleyball—to be disputed in the games.

POC president Celso Dayrit, Metro Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando and Manila Sports Council (Masco) chair Ali Atienza have been invited to the 9 a.m. opening ceremony at the Rizal Memorial track oval.

Joining the special guests in the mini-Olympics organized by the CTW Group and supported by Cebu Pacific, GCAA Executive Committee, the Philippine Sports Commission, Department of Education and the Philippine Olympic Committee are sports executives of Milo, headed by Pat Goc-Ong.

Lucky breaks propel Carapiet to kart title

CARMONA, Cavite—Edgesports' Ivan Carapiet, aided by a pair of lucky breaks, powered his way to two podium finishes to clinch the KT Light title of the 2003 Shell Karting Super Series last Sunday at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

The 16-year-old Carapiet, second behind leader Blake Go of Team Cebu-CRG in the overall standings, benefited from Go's absence on the starting grid and then needed all his skills to outshine his rivals in the races.

Carapiet figured in a collision in the qualifying heat and started last in the nine-man field.

Needing 15 points or at least a fourth place finish in the last two races to clinch the title, Carapiet wound up third in the first race and then beat pole-sitter Maico Angeles for the checkered flag in the second race of the event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Bridgestone, Nokia, Denso and Eastway Racing.

Go missed the races to pursue a scholarship in London.

Sharing the limelight with Carapiet were 8-year-old Paco Rodriguez of Team Cebu-CRG who bagged the Cadet 85 crown and Archie Rubio who ruled the Novice division.

Benitez sizzles in Pasig Open all-events

IRENE Benitez of Sletba sustained her fiery form against a star-studded cast that includes two members of the world champion trio in the 23rd Pasig Bowling Association Tenpin Open on Thursday at the Green Valley Country Club.

Benitez, herself a member of the RP Team that bagged the silver in the 2002 Asian Games women's trios, scorched the lanes for 2,246 pinfalls, way ahead of PBAP's Liza del Rosario (2,013) and Liza Clutario (2,004) in the Class O all-events of this championships sponsored by Sen. Robert Barbers, Rep. Chuck Mathay III and Boysen Paints.

Arnold Lecaros of TBAM-Prima also shone in the men's division with 2,158, just one pin ahead of PBAP's Chester King. Third was King's teammate, Markwin Tee, with 2,102.

Joan Yambao of TBAM-Prima seized the lead in Class A with 2,098 pinfalls, while TBAM's Edna Beltran set the pace in ladies' Class B with 1,828.

Lecaros teamed up with Mike Crisol for 1,408 and the lead in men's Class O doubles, while Datbi-Dagupan's Tony Patungan and Henry Lok carded 1,243 to pace Class B.

In the team event, Joonee Gatchalian, Lok and Patungan led Class A with 1,893.

Pioneer Badminton serves up Christmas tournament

THE SMASHING success of the Epson Cup badminton tournament has motivated its prime movers to draw up an equally competitive event designed to increase the sport's following in Metro Manila.

Pioneer Badminton, the Mandaluyong City venue of the just-concluded Epson Cup, will again play host to enthusiasts next month when it serves up the Pioneer Badminton Christmas tournament on Dec. 13-14.

And just like the Epson Cup, the Christmas tournament is expected to lure hundreds of shuttlecock artists to the qualifying series set Nov. 23 and 30.

The tournament, backed by Pacific Internet and Magic 89.9 WTM, is open to Pioneer Badminton habitues and non-regulars, according to organizing committee head Dea Alonzo.

Alonzo said at least 50 of the 200 tournament slots would be reserved for non-Pioneer members. Interested parties may call Alonzo at 0917-8112181.

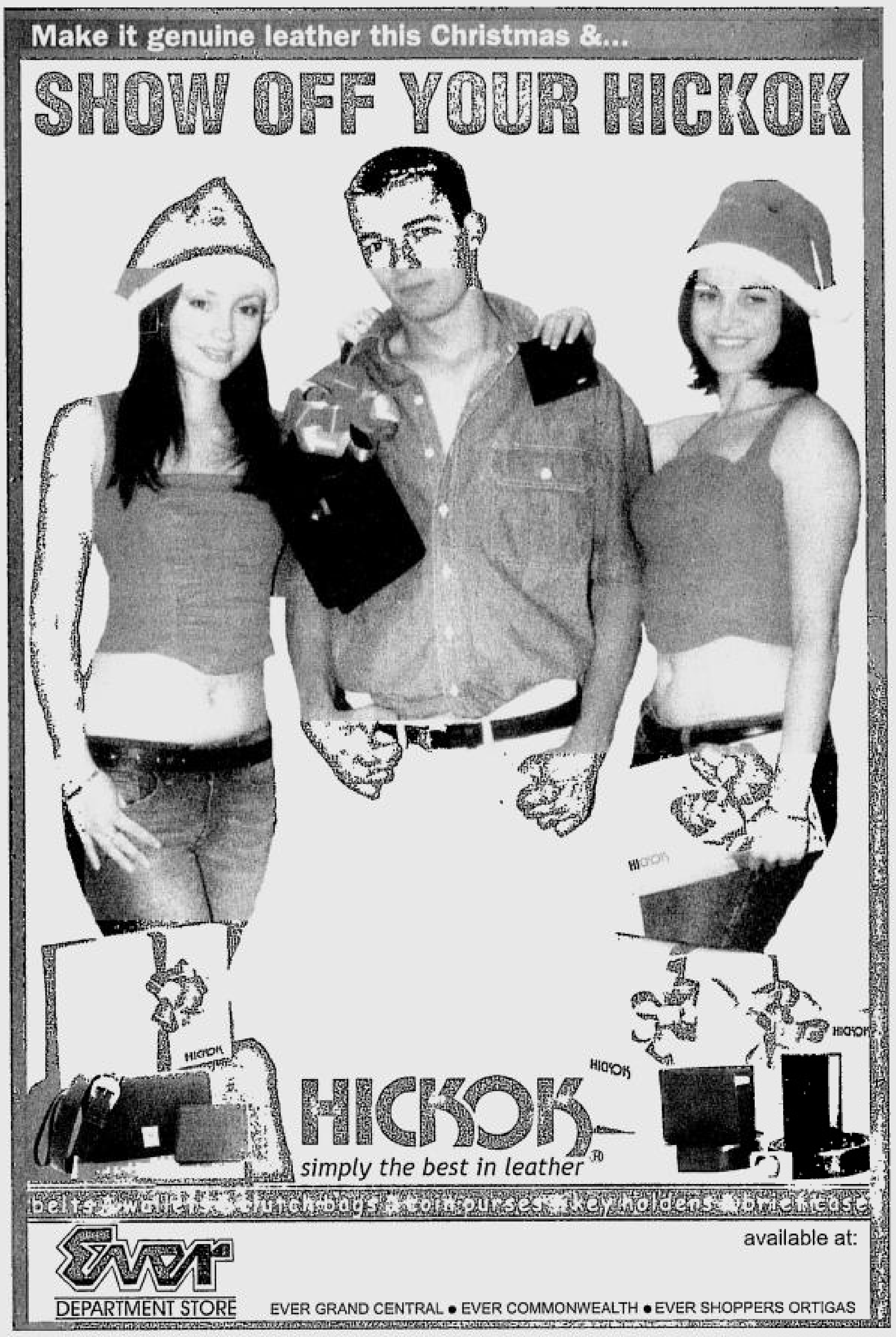
"We initially thought about making the tournament strictly for members only. But the stunning response of participants during the Epson Cup moved us to open the event to non-Pioneer members," said Alonzo.

More than 400 badminton fanatics trooped to Pioneer Badminton during the Epson Cup, forcing organizers to trim the number of competitors down to a manageable level.

Pioneer Badminton's Edmin Tarriela, the brains behind the Epson Cup and the Pioneer Invitationals held early in the year, said they need to limit the number of participants to keep the level of competition at its peak.

"We expect a similar response as far as the number of participants is concerned," said Tarriela.

June Navarro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Mavs down Rockets; Wolves devour Bulls

CHICAGO Bulls guard Jamal Crawford is attended to by medical personnel during the Chicago-Minnesota game. Crawford landed on his head after colliding Minnesota's Fred Hoiberg. REUTERS

DALLAS—Dirk Nowitzki poured in 23 points as the Dallas Mavericks beat the Houston Rockets, 97-86, on Thursday, handing their cross-state rivals just their second loss of the season.

Antoine Walker was next best for Dallas with 17 points; he also collected 12 rebounds while dishing out seven assists.

Steve Nash added 16 points.

The Mavs won despite going just 2-of-19 from three-point territory.

Timberwolves 92, Bulls 89 (OT)

In Chicago, Latrell Sprewell's 27 points paced the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 92-89 overtime win over the Bulls, who are now 1-5 at home.

Sprewell, who also grabbed eight rebounds, hit from three-point range in the waning seconds to force extra time.

Kevin Garnett added 19 points and 17 boards for Minnesota.

The Bulls, who got 25 points from Jalen Rose, lost Jamal Crawford in the late stages when he fell on his head.

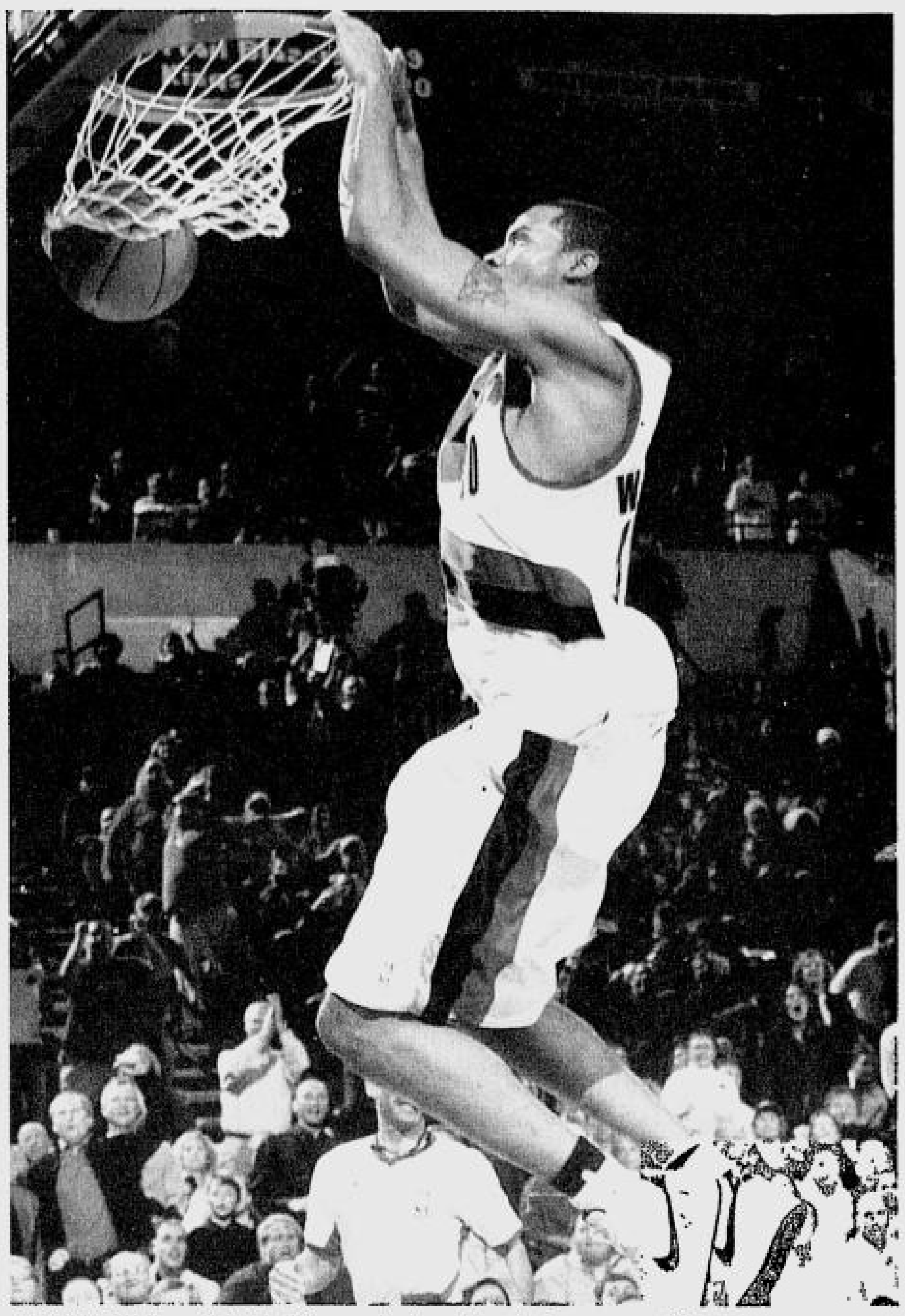
He was removed on a stretcher after spending several minutes on the floor.

Blazers extend Cheeks contract

The tumultuous Portland Trail Blazers will have a steadying presence for another year.

The Trail Blazers signed coach Maurice Cheeks to a one-year contract extension through the 2005-06 season, the National Basketball Association team announced before Thursday night's game against Sacramento.

- Solar Sports will telecast the Houston Rockets-Phoenix Suns game today "live" at 9:30 a.m., with a replay at 8 p.m. *AFP*



RASHEED Wallace of the TrailBlazers dunks against the Sacramento Kings. AFP

Bryant appears before trial judge for 1st time

EAGLE, Colorado—Kobe Bryant made his first court appearance Thursday before the judge who will handle his sexual assault trial, saying nothing as the parents of his accuser sat just a few feet away.

It was the first time family members of the 19-year-old woman have attended a hearing in the case and the first time they have seen the Los Angeles Lakers guard in person, prosecution spokeswoman Krista Flannigan said.

Besides the parents, two brothers and a cousin of the woman were present. The family left the courthouse without commenting, though Flannigan said they told her they were glad they came.

Bryant, who played a home game in Los Angeles the night before, sat calmly through the 12-minute procedural hearing, occasionally whispering to one of his attorneys. He left immediately afterward but Lakers officials said bad weather kept him from arriving in time for practice. *AP*

Germany leads World Cup

WOOSNAM

KIAWAH ISLAND, South Carolina—Germany's Alex Cejka and Marcel Siem combined to shoot a 5-under 67 in windy conditions Thursday to take a one-stroke lead after the first round of the World Cup.

Wales' Ian Woosnam and Bradley Dredge opened with a 68 in the best-ball round, while the United States' Jim Furyk and Justin Leonard were tied for seventh after a 71 on The Ocean Course.

The two-man teams will play an alternate-shot round Friday in the World Golf Championships event. After another best-ball round Saturday, play will end Sunday with a second alternate-shot round.

Cejka and Siem had six birdies and a bogey on the 7,296-yard Pete Dye-designed layout. The Germans bogeyed No. 17—with Cejka's par putt rimming out—and salvaged par on the 18th after Siem drove into the rough.

"It really was very tough for us, especially 17 and 18," Cejka said. "But I think it was tougher during the round into the wind for me. "I wouldn't say there is a hole where you can rest. Every shot you have to give 100 percent, otherwise you miss it on the wrong side and there is no shot at all."

Siem, 23, is ranked 296th in the world,

"It was a tough start today," Siem said. "I was really nervous at the first tee. It was the biggest tournament I ever teed off."

Woosnam said the course is more difficult now than it was in Europe's loss to the United States in the 1991 Ryder Cup.

"They've put in a lot more bunkers; changed the 18th hole," Woosnam said. "When the wind comes up, it's very, very demanding. This is weather where you want to run the ball in, but you can't do it here because of the grass. It just stops short of the green." *AP*

Kane leads Mobile tilt; Delasin 2 off

MOBILE, Alabama—Canada's Lorie Kane overcame an opening bogey, gusty winds and cool temperatures Thursday to post a 2-under-par 70, good enough for a one-stroke lead over Australian Karrie Webb at the Mobile LPGA Tournament of Champions.

Only two of the 29 players in the $1.3 million- event broke par on a day when the wind played havoc with club selection. It was so bad that South Korean star Se Ri Pak opened her quest for a "three-peat" with a 76.

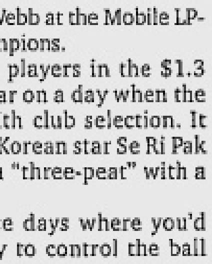
"It was one of those days where you'd just hit a shot and try to control the ball flight as much as you can," said Kane. "The only good thing was it was out of the left or right and down or in." The only bad thing that happened to Kane was her bogey at the par-4 first hole, where she drove into a fairway bunker and eventually missed a 25-foot par putt.

"Starting with a bogey was not what I'd planned, but I said to myself that it was not going to ruin my day," she said. "I worked hard and had some chances." Kane's first birdie came at the par-5 fourth hole, where she hit a 7-wood to the back fringe and chipped to two feet. In fact, all three of her birdies were from two feet—at the par-4 seventh and par-3 14th.

Unfazed by the wind, Kane was able to work around the rest of The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail at Magnolia Grove with a series of pars.

Hee-Won Han of South Korea and Dorothy Delasin were the only players to shoot par. Catriona Matthew of Scotland was another stroke back after posting a 73, a shot better than Wendy Ward. *AFP*

Wie to play in Sony golf



WIE

HONOLULU— Michelle Wie accepted a sponsor's exemption to play in the Sony Open in January, putting her in position to become the youngest woman to play in a PGA Tour event.

"It's a dream to play in the Sony Open," the 14-year-old Wie said Thursday. "I just hope I can play good and show what I can do."

Gov. Linda Lingle said she requested that tournament officials allow Wie to play in her hometown event, the PGA Tour's first full-field tournament of the year.

Wie failed in two previous attempts to qualify for the tournament. She shot a 73 last year in Monday qualifying, and had an 84 in 2000.

Wie has played in nine professional tournaments this year. *AP*

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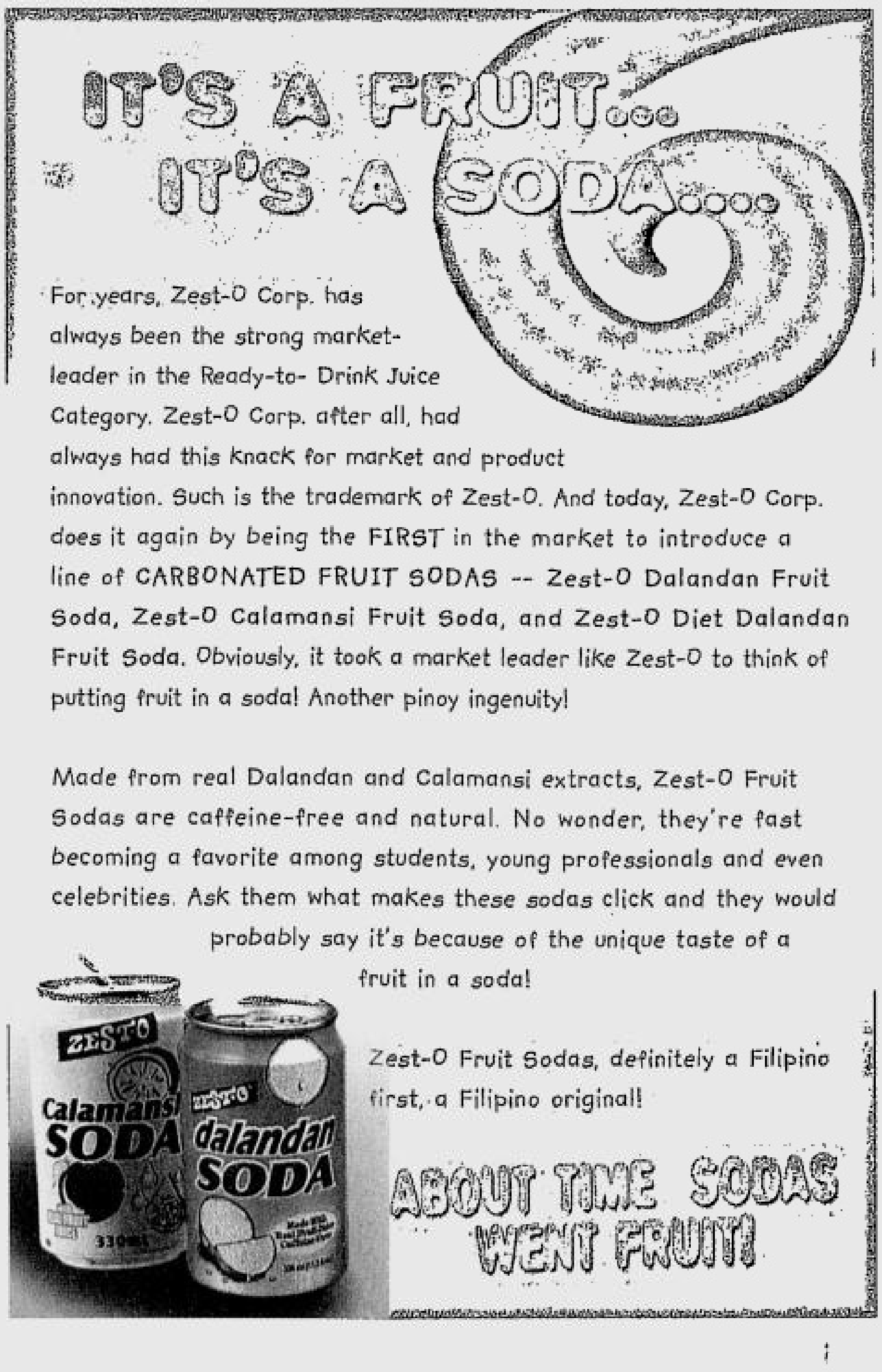

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ATP MASTERS

Agassi, Schuettler gain semis

HOUSTON—Andre Agassi claimed an explosive 7-6, 3-6, 6-4 win over David Nalbandian on Thursday, reaching the semifinals of the ATP Masters Cup and moving a step closer to the title he last held 13 years ago.

Agassi, who has not claimed the Masters since his first visit to the year-end finale in 1990, will next face Germany's Rainer Schuettler on Saturday in a rematch of the Australian Open final for a chance to play for the season's final prize.

The other semifinal will pit Red Group leader Wimbledon champion Roger Federer against either world No. 1 Andy Roddick or Argentine Guillermo Coria, who clash on Friday to decide the last berth.

With second place in the Blue Group standings and a spot in the final four of the $3.65-million year-end event riding on the outcome, tempers flared on a chilly stadium court with an enraged Nalbandian accusing tournament officials of favoring Americans with their calls.

After losing a hotly-contested first set tiebreak that featured two disputed calls and Agassi triumphing 12-10 on a double fault, Nalbandian engaged in heated exchange with umpire Enric Molina, heightening the tension in a match already tingling with excitement.

That outburst brought ATP supervisor Mark Darby onto the court, who tried to calm the fiery Argentine.

Much of Nalbandian's anger was directed at tournament owner and promoter Jim McIngvale, who invested $27 million in this event but has come under criticism in some corners for his rampant support of American players from his front row seat behind the baseline. *Reuters*

AGASSI throws a kiss to the crowd after his victory over Carlos Ferrero. AFP

SCHUETTLER of Germany celebrates a point against Roddick during the Tennis Masters Cup. Schuettler won, 4-6, 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/3). AFP

Lack of funds puts Pastor stint in peril

LAST year's Asian Formula Renault champion Enzo Pastor is still unsure whether he will be able to compete in the Macau Grand Prix, set to be flagged off this Sunday, due to a dearth of sponsors.

Pastor is now in the former Portuguese enclave where he is anxiously waiting for news if he can still race in his Formula category.

Tom Pastor, Enzo's father, said they are thankful for the help that they have received from San Miguel Corp., Cebu Pacific Air and private individuals, but "our funds are not enough to pay for his ride with the top-ranked Meritus Team."

He said Enzo has been given a second preference over the car that they have been trying to reserve for him.

"I am hoping that we can still find additional sponsors who can help us raise funds to complete the $35,000 that he needs to be able to race, and I'd like to make a last-ditch appeal to all corporate entities and government agencies."

The 21-year-old Enzo, possibly the Philippines' brightest hope to win a Formula race in the fabled Grand Prix, is scheduled to vie in the Formula Renault category of the races.

The last Filipino winner of a Formula race in Macau was the late Arsenio "Dodjie" Laurel, who steered his Lotus Honda to victory in 1966.

Pastor qualified second in the event last year but was wiped out in the first lap after he swerved and hit a tire barrier to avoid touching wheels with the leading car.

La Salle eyes 2nd win

DE LA SALLE guns for a second straight win today against Far Eastern University in the Philippine Badminton Tournaments (PBT) Intercollegiate Cup at the Olympic Badminton Center in Libis, Quezon City.

Led by national team mainstays Paula Obanana and Michelle Guerrero, the Green Archers meet the Tamaraws in the first match at 2 p.m.

Playing in the second match set at 5:30 p.m. are University of the Philippines and University of the East.

De La Salle defeated UE, 4-1, and University of Santo Tomas stunned FEU, 4-1, in the opening day of this event offering P50,000 worth of sports equipment to the champion. Second and third placers will get P25,000 and P12,500, respectively.

PCA tennis under way

THIRTY-TWO matches kick off the P400,000 Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Open Tennis Championships today at the PCA indoor courts in Plaza Dilao, Paco.

Defending champion and tournament fourth seed Joseph Victorino faces La Salle star player Yannick Guba, while fifth seed and many time RP Davis Cupper Adelo Abadia battles 2002 US Orange Bowl 14-under campaigner Kyle Dandan at 1 p.m.

Afro-Asian Games silver medallist and second seed Johnny Arcilla goes up against University of Santo Tomas player Pius Ocampo at noon.

Arcilla, who will banner the men's team in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games next month, has won nine straight titles this year.

Other matches set at noon are No. 6 and 2002 Coca-Cola Open runner-up Rolando Ruel Jr. against Ferdinand Saraza and No. 13 Jesse Lapore against Mario Sabas, and Mindanao wild card Rollyto Litang against San Sebastian coach Frederick Morgan.

Also vying for the P80,000 champion's purse are four Koreans led by Chung Hee-Seok, who lost to Joseph Lizardo in the 1998 final. Chung Hee-Seok also reached the doubles final with Chung Seong-Yoo.

Chung Hee-Seok, the No. 1 seed with 703 ATP points, tangles with Miguel Narvaez while second-seeded Oh Seung-Hoon, ranked No. 1419 in the world, plays Gilbert Estrada.

Seventh seed Lee Sung-Hoon takes on Visayas wild card Fritzgerald Tabura.

IOC allows transsexual athletes to play in Olympics

LONDON—Athletes who have undergone sex change operations will be eligible to compete in the Olympics for the first time under new rules being finalized by the IOC.

The International Olympic Committee convened a meeting in Sweden last month of medical experts in the field and will announce its policy in the next few weeks.

"We will have no discrimination," IOC medical director Patrick Schamasch told The Associated Press on Thursday. "The IOC will respect human rights."

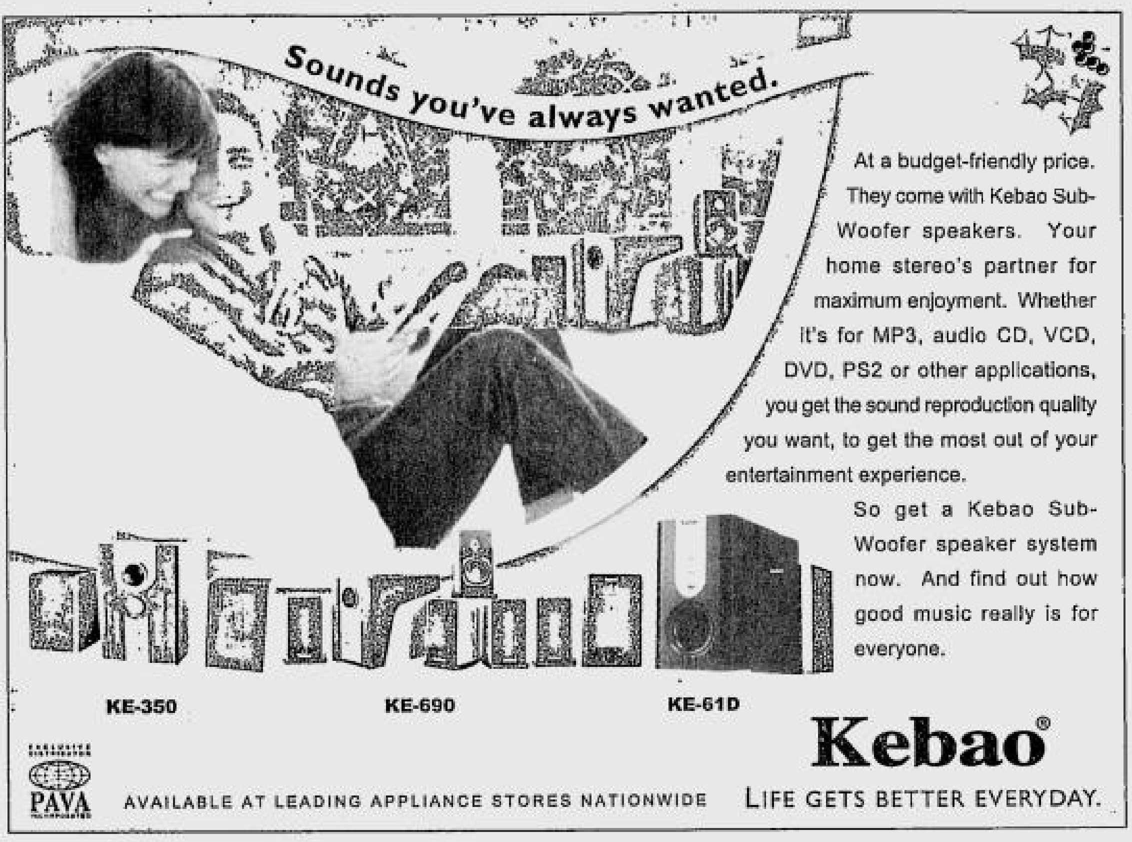
Details are still being worked out, but Schamasch said transsexual athletes will be eligible for the Olympics once they have passed a certain amount of time after sex-change surgery.

"The trend is to have an ineligibility period," he said. "Then after certain conditions have been fulfilled, the athlete will be able to compete in his or her new sex."

The exact length of the waiting period hasn't been determined. Schamasch said officials want to make sure that any side effects of hormone therapy have worn off.

Schamasch said he didn't know whether there were any potential transsexual athletes in line to compete in next summer's Athens Olympics, but noted that several international sports federations have asked the IOC for guidance.

"We need to be proactive," he said. *AP*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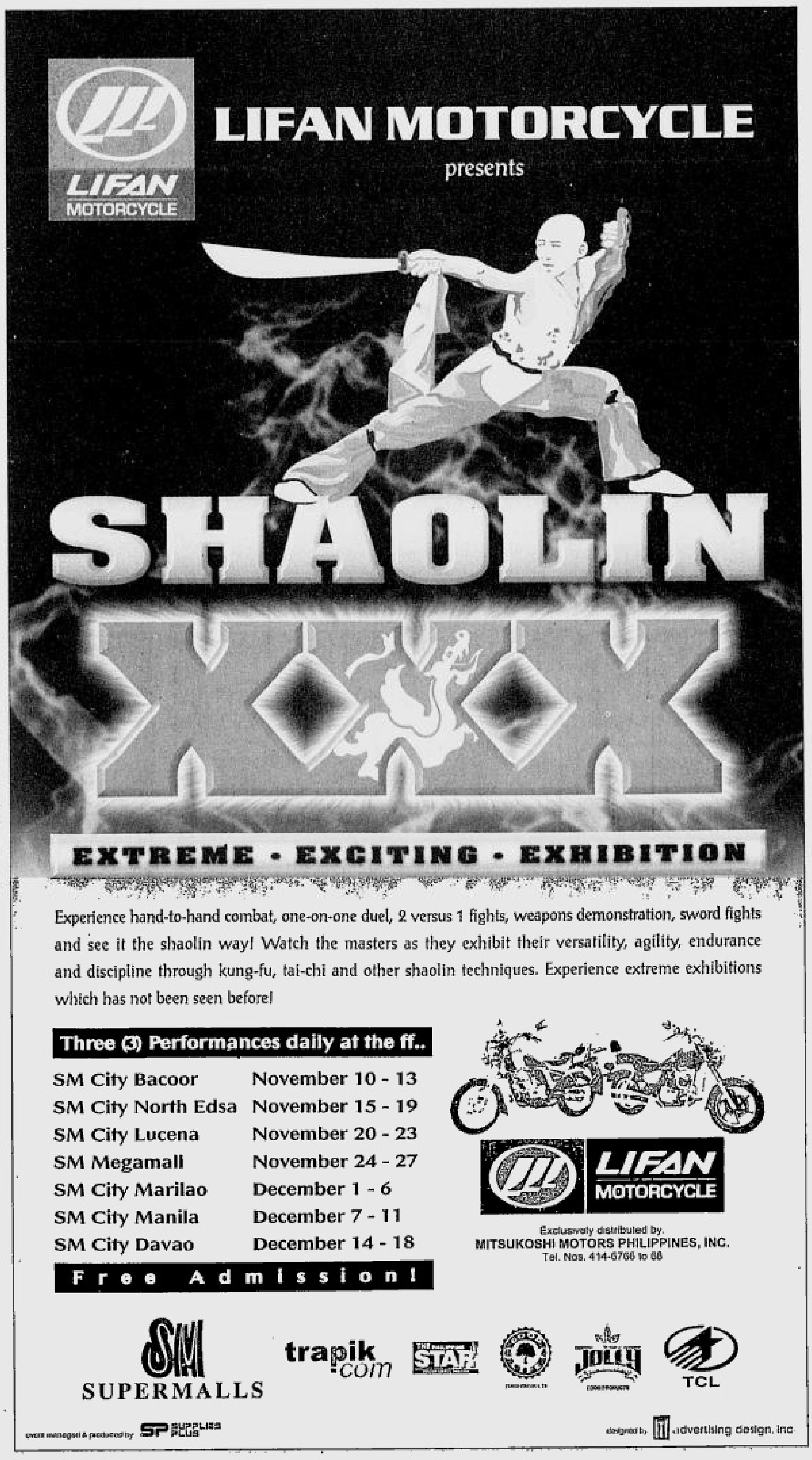
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4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

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11 THE PHONE
12 MAPANUKSO

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3 LIBERATED
4 MY FIRST ROMANCE

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6 FREAKY FRIDAY
7 RESERVED
8 INNER SENSES

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4 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 DARK BLUE
6 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 MAPANUKSO
8 IDENTITY
9 MY FIRST ROMANCE
10 THE WISHER
11 MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
12 LIBERATED

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5 WISHER - 11:05, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
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Brazil spikers qualify

OSAKA, Japan—South American champions Brazil clinched a ticket for the Athens Olympics when it defeated world silver medalists the United States in the World Cup women's volleyball tournament on Friday.

With a 25-15, 25-23, 25-20 victory, Brazil has now nine wins against one defeat to secure a top three place in the 12-team round robin and win one of the three tickets available here for the Olympics.

The United States stood with seven wins against three defeats with one more match remaining in the tournament.

It was a repeat performance for Brazil, which brushed aside the Americans in three sets in a playoff to win the bronze medal in the Sydney Olympics three years ago.

It will be its seventh straight appearance in the Olympics since it first took part in the 1980 event in Moscow. *AFP*

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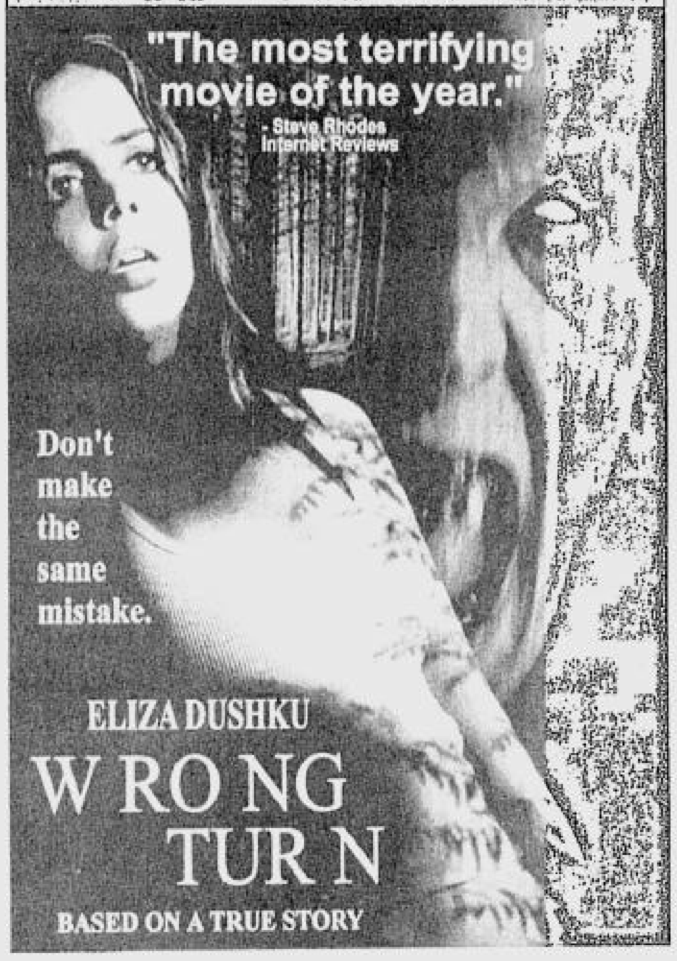
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Beer na Beer faces Skyflakes

BEER na Beer tries to move within a win of the crown as it clashes with Skyflakes anew today in the Corporate Billiards League (CBL) best-of-seven championship series at the Robinson's Galleria.

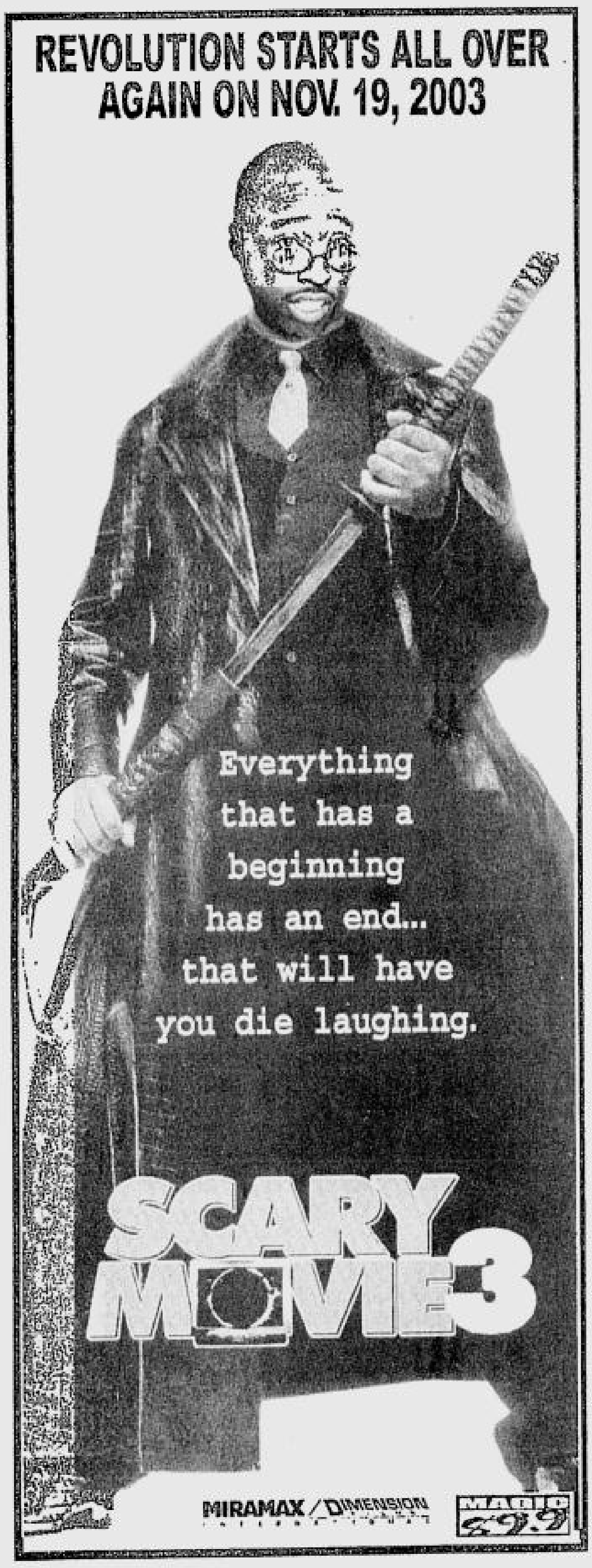
The Brewers are up at 2-1 after a 5-4 triumph over the Crackers Experts last weekend in this series sponsored by Tanduay The No. 1 Rhum with the support of Rommel's Billiards—the official table.

And to win Game Four will give the trio of skipper Marlon Manalo, Al Ortega and Emil de la Paz a big morale booster to go all out for the crown. The match will be telecast over the National Broadcasting Network at 8-9 tonight, with hosts Danny Romero and revered billiards analyst Recah Trinidad.

"*Kung parehong naging maingat* last week, *tantsa ko lang, mas magiging maingat at mahigpit ang laban sa* Game Four. *Galing kontra galing, talino kontra talino. Suwerte lang kami* last week *at nagmintis ang kalaban, kundi sila sana ang lamang,*" said Manalo.

But Skyflakes will surely give it all to get even with Beer Na Beer and shorten the series to a best-of-three.

Skyflakes skipper Venancio Tanyo, backed by fellow SEA Games gold medalist and veteran local campaigner Dennis Baay, hopes they could avert unnecessary risks to boost chances for the crown and the P100,000 purse.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Ali 7	WRONG TURN

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ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MAPANUKSO
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

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B	
C	

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2 DARK BLUE	2 DARK BLUE	7 THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 12:15 3:00 5:45 8:30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 1:55 4:40 7:25 10:10	2 DARK BLUE
3 THE WISHER	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 12:15 3:00 5:45 8:30 11:15	REGINE VELASQUEZ NOV 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, 9PM	GUARANTEED SEATS MATRIX REVOLUTIONS 1:00 3:45 6:30 9:15 12:00	3 MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
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Masagana CINEMA 1 2 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290, 833.3274

1	MAPANUKSO
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3	LIBERATED

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	WRONG TURN
2	TEMPTING HEART
3	MAPANUKSO
4 DOLBY DIGITAL EX	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5	LIBERATED

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6	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

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(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	LIBERATED
2	THE SPY

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2	MY FIRST ROMANCE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1
2
3

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) TEL. 776-74-21

1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	LIBERATED
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	LIBERATED
6	MAPANUKSO
7 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
8 (SDDS)	DARK BLUE
9 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364-3781

1	LIBERATED
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	MAPANUKSO
4 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5	DARK BLUE
6 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
7 (DTS)	WRONG TURN
8	TEMPTING HEART
9	THE RUNDOWN

Gotesco Commonwealth
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1	LIBERATED
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	IDENTITY
5	MAPANUKSO

Gotesco Ortigas
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2	LIBERATED
3	IDENTITY
4	MAPANUKSO
5 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Universal
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1	RESERVE

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	RESERVE

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2	MAPANUKSO
3	LIBERATED
4	WRONG TURN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
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1 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	MAPANUKSO
3	TEPTING HEART
4	WRONG TURN
5	LIBERATED

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(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

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2	RESERVE

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2	LIBERATED
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DARK BLUE
4 (SDDS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
5 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
6	MAPANUKSO
7	WRONG TURN

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
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1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

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Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1	LIBERATED
2	UNDERWORLD
3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	UNDERWORLD
3 (DOLBY)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	IDENTITY

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
2	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
3	UNDERWORLD
4	IDENTITY

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	THE PHONE
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	THE RUNDOWN
4	

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1	MY FIRST ROMANCL
2	MATCHSTICK MEN
3	IDENTITY
4	MATRIX REVOLUTION

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1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	IDENTITY
3	MY FIRST ROMANCE

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1 (SDDS)	PRIVATE LESSON - 2
2	LIBERATED
3 (DTS)	MAPANUKSO
4	LIGAYA PANTASYA NG BAYAN

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1 (DOLBY)	UNDERWORLD
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	LIBERATED
5	MAPUPULANG LABI

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

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2	MAPUPULANG LABI
3	RESERVE

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1	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
2	IDENTITY
3	MY FIRST ROMANCE

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(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

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2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3 (DTS)	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
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2	RESERVE

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1	THE RUNDOWN
2	MY FIRST ROMANCE
3	RESERVE

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(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	UNDERWORLD
2	UP TOWN GIRL
3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
4	IDENTITY

Jade Cinema
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1	IDENTITY
2	RESERVE
3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
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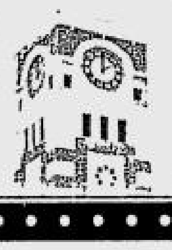

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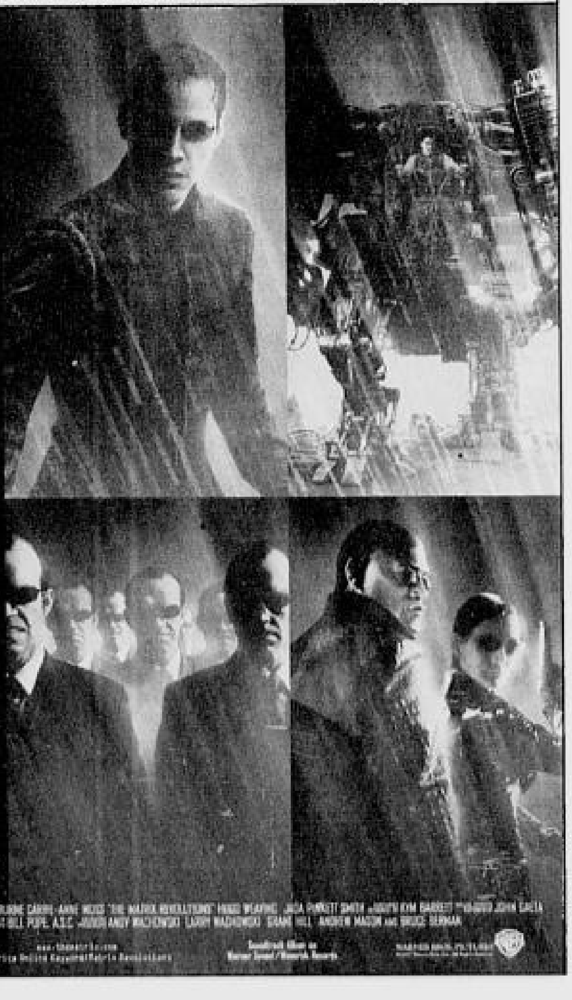

Smashzone opens doors tomorrow

SMASHZONE, the newest badminton facility in Las Piñas, opens its doors at 10 a.m. tomorrow at Warehouse No. 9, Phase 2, No. 98 Marcos Alvarez St., Talon Las Piñas, Metro Manila. It features eight brand-new Rex courts and a coffee shop. For inquiries, call 8009360.

X-Games bouldering qualifier

THE SPORT climbing association of the Philippines will be holding the ESPN X-Games Bouldering qualifier at the Power Up Center for Climbing and Fitness in Quezon City tomorrow. Expected to compete are Dennis Diaz, Kristian Guerrero, Erwin Guzom and Ina Flores.

Like the UN

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IF we can't be the best in the SEA Games, why do we keep sending athletes there?

That's like asking a mountain climber, "Why do you climb mountains?"

The climber's immortal answer has always been, "Because it's there."

In the same token, we join the SEA Games event because it's there. Like every mountain on Earth, it is almost impossible now to obliterate the SEA Games; only a nuclear war can do that.

To pursue the case, we join the SEA Games because we are part and parcel of the Games. We helped build the Games nearly 40 years ago. That's one of the eternal duties of every member of the Southeast Asian region: Every project relating to SEA needs the cooperation of member-nations. To do otherwise would mean one has become a renegade, if not a downright rebel without a cause.

Thus, you finish either first or last in the SEA Games, it's no big deal really.

You finish first and that's mere ego massage.

You finish last, charge that to experience. Try again next time.

That's why I find our officials so amusing each time the SEA Games event comes around the corner. They start harking about medals to be won, as though winning was all there is to it in the Games. They isolate the disciplines that cannot possibly strike gold and venerate those with golden potentials, as though setback-bound athletes are second-class citizens in this republic. As I keep saying, every athlete is a winner in the sense that he/she could not have made it to the national team if he/she didn't lose gallons of sweat, blood and tears just to earn that coveted berth.

Indonesia, the region's most populous nation, used to dominate the biennial meet. But in 1999 and 2001 in Brunei and Kuala Lumpur, it lost its appetite to win and surrendered the overall crown to Thailand and Malaysia, respectively.

We had our worst finish in 2001 in Kuala Lumpur, fifth. That was exactly 10 years after we had our best finish in Manila in 1991, second.

We could have finished first in 1991—as all hosts traditionally emerge overall champions—but for some oversight on the part of some strategists in the final drive for home. We lost the title to Indonesia by a single gold. Had we won the last gold staked on the last day of the event—a winnable gold, actually—we could have snatched the crown as a host country would win it should it fall into a tie for first. With big strides being scored year in and year out by our neighbors, it has become almost impossible at this stage to get a serious stab at the overall crown again. Not even in 2005, when we will host the SEA Games again. There's so much to undo for us to become solid contenders again in the region.

The country had continuously slid in the last four, five, editions of the SEA Games; we also finished fourth in Jakarta in 1997. To finish fifth in Vietnam this December would be the realistic goal, but to finish fourth would be a dream come true. To finish third would be next to impossible.

And so again, the question: Why do we still need to be there if we couldn't even finish fourth or better?

The reason is, like the very existence itself of the United Nations, we just have to be there. Look, aren't we still with the UN even though George W. Bush ignored the UN decision stopping the United States from attacking Iraq?

Brotherhood, they call it.

Winning is but gravy.

Torre returns, says RP chessers ready

GRANDMASTER Eugene Torre returned home yesterday, happy that once again he'd brought honor to the country.

TORRE shows his trophy to well-wishers led by Naia security chief Gen. Angel Atutubo . ROGER MARGALLO

"I'm happy for myself and the country," said Torre, who topped the recent Leuven Open in Belgium. "Hopefully this victory will pave the way for our successful campaign in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games in December."

The 52-year-old Torre was accompanied by National Master Oliver Barbosa, 19, who wound up fifth and emerged the tournament's top junior player and (Elo) 2300 performer.

GMs Joey Antonio and Bong Villamayor, second and third placer, respectively, planed in Thursday.

Torre and Barbosa were met at the Naia by National Chess Federation of the Philippines secretary general lawyer Sammy Estimo, who arranged the two players' courtesy call with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and FG project director lawyer Rod Nepomuceno yesterday.

Torre, whose last international victory came in 1994 in Kuala Lumpur, thanked the First Gentleman for supporting Filipino chess players, especially in international campaigns.

Torre, Asia's first GM, dedicated his victory to the Filipinos and the late Dona Trining Nevada of Baguio City, whom he considered a part of his family.

Though he was forced to pay 450 Euros for a taxi ride in the boundary of Belgium and Austria going to the Vienna International Airport after train workers in Austria went on strike, Torre said he was glad that they did not miss their plane.

For topping the 112-man field, Torre earned 1,500 Euros.

NM Marlon Bernardino contributor

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- Membership is subject to approval.

SPORTSWATCH

Alaska football at Ayala Alabang

THE 8TH Alaska Football Cup will be staged at the Ayala Alabang Country Club today and tomorrow. Organized by the Alabang Football School (AFS), commissioners for the festival are Hans Smit, president of the Metro Manila Girls Football Association and Inaki Vicente—former Philippine star striker and head of AFS. It will feature 2,700 athletes in the men's and women's divisions. There will be an exhibition game featuring boys and girls 3-6 years old. Alaska sports development manager Joaquin Trillo said 180 teams will be competing.

Nesvita badminton unfolds today

THE FIRST Nesvita Badminton Executive Cup unfolds today at the Power Smash Badminton Center in Pasong Tamo, Makati. Among the participating teams are Asia Trust, Union Cement, China Bank-A, Caltex-B, Shell-a, RCBC-A, Goodyear and Allied Bank.

Atienza appeals for support

MANILA Sports Council (MASCO) chief Arnold "Ali" Atienza yesterday appealed to sports officials to stop political bickering and focus on our national athletes gearing up for the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games. Atienza, himself a former national athlete and Asian taekwondo champion, raised the call after rumors of a revamp in the Philippine Sports Commission was again floated around the sports community.

Motorsports festival at Subic

MOTORSPORTS personalities gather at the the Subic International Raceway for the fourth Philippine Motorsports Festival (PMF) on Nov. 22-23. A brainchild of two-time circuit racing champion George Ramirez, the event will feature circuit racing, car rally, scooter, karting, jetski and radio-controlled saling and power boat racing. For inquiries, call 671-6926 or (6347) 252-4626 and 252-4354.

Tuason Memorial Cup tomorrow

THE COUNTRY'S top karters will compete in the Arthur Tuason Memorial Cup presented by Standard Insurance and Demvels Enterprises tomorrow at the Carmona Circuit in Cavite. Up for grabs in the event organized by the Tuason Racing School are cash prizes of P25,000 and P40,000 in the Novice and F125 expert classes. Leading the entries are Edgesport driver Ivan Carapiet and Junior 125 and Open class champion Michelle Bumgarner.

Bass fishing tourney at Caliraya

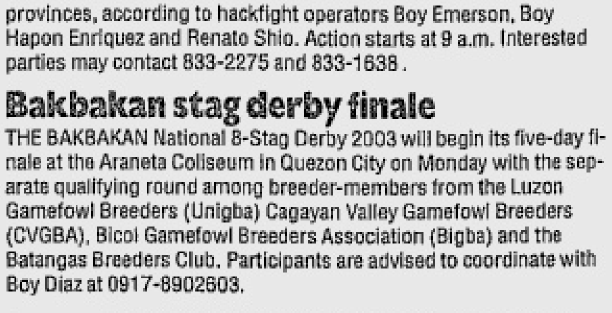
THE ARCILLA'S Cup bass fishing tournament will be held today and tomorrow at the Caliraya Lake in Cavinti, Laguna. It starts at 7 a.m. and ends at 5 p.m. Tournament fee is P500. For details, call Roland Zamora at 415-5364/0916-830-3287 or Camille James at 373-0248/373-0743/0918-9394196.

Hackfights grand opening

ALL roads lead to the Roligon Mega Cocpit today as the grand opening of hackfights finally unfolds. Invited in the grand opening today are well-known cockers and breeders of Metro Manla and nearby provinces, according to hackfight operators Boy Emerson, Boy Hapon Enriquez and Renato Shio. Action starts at 9 a.m. Interested parties may contact 833-2275 and 833-1638 .

Bakbakan stag derby finale

THE BAKBAKAN National 8-Stag Derby 2003 will begin its five-day finale at the Araneta Coliseum in Quezon City on Monday with the separate qualifying round among breeder-members from the Luzon Gamefowl Breeders (Unigba) Cagayan Valley Gamefowl Breeders (CVGBA), Bicol Gamefowl Breeders Association (Bigba) and the Batangas Breeders Club. Participants are advised to coordinate with Boy Diaz at 0917-8902603.



NATIONAL RALLYCROSS
Second placer Jay Navarro of Team DMF aboard his Toyota Corolla during the Ultron National Rallycross Series at Clark Ecozone.

BUSINESS

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
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Maynilad seeks court protection vs creditors

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LOPEZES' Maynilad Water Services Inc. has sought court protection from its creditors after an international arbitrator ordered it to pay more than P6.77 billion in concession fees to the government.

The suit, filed with the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on Nov. 13, seeks to allow Maynilad to avoid liquidation and pursue a rehabilitation plan.

"Maynilad filed a petition for corporate rehabilitation because it now foresees the difficulty of meeting its debts when they fall due as a result of the international arbitration panel's decision," Maynilad's parent firm Benpres Holdings Corp. said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The International Arbitration Court last week ordered Maynilad to pay P6.77 billion in dues to the government and to maintain its 25-year water concession agreement.

Maynilad had notified the government last year it would give up the franchise after failing to win regulatory approval to raise water rates. It alleged that the government failed to comply with the terms of the concession agreement.

After President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration disputed the allegations, Maynilad took the case to arbitration.

The arbitrators also allowed the state regulator, Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, to draw on a $120-million performance bond put up by Maynilad when it bid for the franchise.

Benpres guarantees 60 percent of the Maynilad performance bond, while the balance of 40 percent is guaranteed by Benpres' Maynilad joint venture partner, the Ondeo-Degremont Group of France.

Benpres said Maynilad's recourse to the courts "will enable Maynilad to ensure continuous

MAYNILAD/B2

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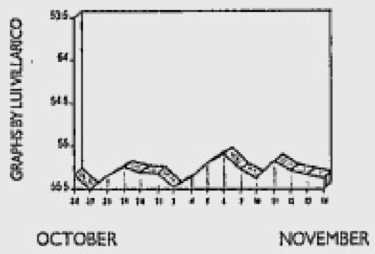

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Bunch of rice

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

ACCORDING to the imported humorist Mark Twain, who was quoting the imported politician Benjamin Disraeli, there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies and statistics.

As this cute administration of Gloriaetta, just the other day, was forced to talk about something positive, for a change, we were fed some impressive statistics.

You may torture me with three straight days of concert of the Three Terrors, who happen to be Cabinet members having a good time, while the country is in trouble.

But I still can't say if those statistics qualify for Mark Twain's bunch of lies.

* * *

FOR those statistics were really remarkable. The Department of Agriculture said that, in the past quarter, our farm production grew by an astounding 4.32 percent. Wow!

On their own, the lies, este, the statistics, would tend to show that we are all going to grow fat one of these days. Finally we can produce a lot of food for everybody.

To think, this cute administration accomplished such an astounding growth in the agriculture sector, despite the past quarter's terrible weather.

Actually, typhoons damaged a lot of crops. The government statistics did not show it, but I gathered that our corn production, for instance, even posted a slight drop.

It even shows in the prices for feed grains. They are running up. Feed makers are thus looking for alternative, i.e. imported. What else is new?

Yet we were told that we just had a remarkable quarter in agriculture. And so where did all that growth come from? Don't tell me it was just pure magic!

* * *

IT came mainly from rice production, according to a text message which I got from Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo, who was on an official trip to China.

Sito Lorenzo was quoted in the reports on the statistics on agriculture growth, and yet it turned out he was in China.

Apparently, anyway, he went to China to get more "hybrid" rice seeds, in the form of a grant from the Chinese government.

Hybrid rice is Sito's biggest obsession, because it yields much more rice per hectare than other varieties. It is our only chance to produce all the rice we need.

In China, the hybrid rice program was so successful, that country today has in stock enough rice for more than one billion people for one year. It's a big bunch of rice.

The problem in China is no longer rice shortage. That country worries that it could be buried in rice. It has such a huge glut that it does not know where to store it.

* * *

ALRIGHT, since rice is the biggest sub-sector in agriculture, a good harvest such as the one we had in the past quarter, can pull up the growth rate for agriculture altogether.

And that was actually the story in the past quarter. All the other sectors, such as poultry, piggery, and fishery, suffered a slowdown in growth.

The other sectors still grew, sure, but their growth rates were lower than that 4.32-percent growth rate for the entire agriculture sector.

In other words, we may have rice on the table for Christmas, but not all of us are likely going to have ham or sashimi.

* * *

SOMETHING in the statistics, which may or may not be lies, also bothered me. And that is, the mathematics.

You see, in the same months last year, agriculture posted what economists idiotically refer to as a "negative growth rate."

That is the same as saying that your kid is growing backward. You know—something akin to a "shrinking growth!"

Anyway, the point is that the amazing statistics in the past quarter, in reality, was aided by the lower base figure for the comparative period in 2002.

And that was what Mark Twain meant about statistics being lies. What we had was not pure unadulterated growth. We just saw a little mathematical magic.

In other words, we did not actually produce a lot of food. At least we don't have to worry about getting fat. Really.

* * *

WITH the good rice harvest in the past quarter, what will happen now to all those 1,500 or so permits which our good government issued for rice importation?

I am not kidding. Our government issued all those 1,500 or so import permits. In return for what, is up to you to figure out.

From what I gathered, all those who got the special favor from the government are rushing to get into rice supply contracts abroad.

I have bad news for you, compadre, because the NFA just suspended all importation of rice.

My source said that the NFA council will likely meet in two weeks to decided whether or not to allow rice importation at all.

Since the government will likely thumb down any importation, people can always resort to smuggling. Tax free pa!

* * *

AS everybody knows, if this cute administration is good in one thing, it is in borrowing a lot of money abroad.

To raise the money for next year's elections, *este*, for next year's budget, the government just issued some $250 million worth of bonds.

For interest rate, it got an amazing 250 points over Libor. Now this is not basketball. In bond flotation, 250 points may not be good.

Compare that rate with what the Ayala group got, for instance, for its dollar borrowings of 200 points over Libor.

Or even what San Miguel is likely going to get for its newest borrowings ($200 million) of only 180 points over Libor.

There—the government is not getting good rates on its borrowings. Why? I don't think the reason has anything to do with ability to pay.

The government can just impose taxes left and right to repay its debts. No, it's not the ability to repay. It's all about image.

You see, the banks buying those IOUs are going to resell them to investors. I don't think there is a big demand for the government IOUs.

For one, nobody is falling for the trap of Gloriaetta for a ... well, "national reconciliation."

Shares close marginally higher

SHARE prices closed marginally higher yesterday as select bargain-hunting allowed the market to halt an extended slide, dealers said.

Buying interest was limited to SM Prime Holdings and Globe Telecom as political and security risk concerns continued to weigh on overall sentiment.

Dealers said investors remained jittery following a violent anti-goverment street protest in the Makati financial district on Wednesday.

Newspapers speculated yesterday that the march could be a prelude to another military attempt against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who survived a mutiny in July.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 1.65 points or 0.12 percent to 1,345.53 after seven straight sessions of decline.

Gainers led losers 25 to 17, while 41 stocks were unchanged.

Turnover fell to 162.65 million shares while value rose to P853.99 million compared to 250.59 million shares worth P586.03 million on Thursday.

The all-shares index was up 0.24 points to 835.40, while the commercial-industrial index was down 1.67 to 2,005.03.

Property added 9.48 to 570.53, mining gained 1.08 to 1,661.23, and oil inched up 0.03 at 1.38. Banking and financial services dropped 2.15 to 422.90.

"It was generally a sluggish session ahead of the weekend. Selling pressure tapered offer following seven days of losses, suggesting that some bargain-hunters were back into the market to pick select issues," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

He said, however, that investors will remain cautious following Wednesday's protests because "there could be more of such disturbances in coming days."

Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities said: "I think these political events are just part of what we expect ahead of the May (presidential) elections."

Top-traded PLDT fell P10 to P760, while Globe Telecom added P5 to P800. *AFP*

Maynilad . . .

From page B1

delivery of water services to its consumers."

Benpres said that Maynilad would also seek a clarification of the arbitrator's decision.

The terms and conditions of the continuation of the concession agreement, it stressed, had failed to take into account the financial impact of such a decision.

"In particular, Maynilad is seeking the arbitration panel's guidance on the rate rebasing exercise conducted by the MWSS-Regulatory Office that has a negative effect on the economic viability of the concession," it explained.

"Furthermore, Maynilad is also asking the arbitration panel to consider the impact of authorizing MWSS to draw on the performance bond in the light of the recommendation of the arbitration panel for the parties to seek extra-judicial solutions," it noted.

Maynilad is saddled with about $350 million in debts, including those owed to foreign lenders like Citibank NA, Credit Lyonnais, Chase Manhattan, Credit Industriel et Commercial, Fortis Bank and KBC Bank NV.

Maynilad is 59-percent owned by Benpres, while about 20 percent is owned by Ondeo, a French utility firm formerly known as Suez Lyonnaise des Eaux of France. It covers the west zone consisting of Manila, Pasay, Las Piñas, Malabon, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Parañaque, Bacoor, Kawit, Imus, Cavite City, Noveleta, Rosario and parts of Taguig and Quezon City.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of November 14, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	34,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	16,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	43.5	42	43	972,900
Citystate Savings Bank	15	15	15	15	2,500
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33.5	34	33.5	33.5	94,900
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	270,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	27	26	26.5	493,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	28	28	6,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	4,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1325	1330	1325	1330	1,290
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	26	26	26	26	4,800
Diversified Fin. Network	2	2	2	2	20,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	2,860,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	800	790	800	141,490
Ipeople Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	20,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.04	0.041	0.039	0.041	5,900,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	6,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.83	0.87	0.83	0.87	3,800,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	765	775	745	760	346,340
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	206,500
Manila Electric Co. B	19.5	19.75	19.5	19.75	925,100
Petron Corp.	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	286,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.2	1,041,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	448,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	15,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	82,400
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	54	54.5	132,000
San Miguel Corp. B	60	60.5	60	60	263,600
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
Ayala Corp.	5	5	4.95	5	16,695,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.1	103,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	1,100,000
Aln Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	1,130,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	20,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.215	750,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.055	0.055	0.05	0.05	1,600,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	450,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	17	17	16.75	17	575,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.075	0.08	2,800,000
Ionics Inc.	1.54	1.54	1.5	1.5	241,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	100,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	300,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	2,255,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	320,000
Music Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,010,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.15	0.15	330,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	240,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.095	0.095	0.095	0.095	3,800,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.29	0.32	0.29	0.29	90,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	10,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1.42	1	1.34	130,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.57	1,600,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.4	30,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	380,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	26	26	25	25.5	389,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	20,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6	6	5.9	6	8,784,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.13	0.115	0.125	2,480,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	3,115,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	10,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.19	0.21	0.19	0.21	140,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	2,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	23,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.6	6.4	6.5	29,228,000
Zipporah Rlty Hldgs Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	29,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	1,570,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.33	6,930,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	3,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	5,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	7,920,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	610,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	7,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,895,490	60,499,580.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	54,129,430	541,946,270.00
PRO	43,792,000	245,810,810.00
Mining	55,030,000	5,534,350.00
OIL	7,000,000	22,400.00
GRAND TOTALS :	161,846,920	853,813,410.00

AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	422.90	DOWN 2.15
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,005.03	DOWN 1.67
PRO	570.53	UP 9.48
Mining	1,661.23	UP 1.08
OIL	1.38	UP 0.03
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	835.40	UP 0.24
Composite	1,345.53	UP 1.65

NO. OF ADVANCES: 25; NO. OF DECLINES: 17; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 83; NO. OF TRADES: 1,631

DISCLOSURES

FINAL list of candidates for independent directors of **Asiatrust Bank** include Gilda Pico, Jose Unson and Felix Maramba Jr.

***

MIC Holdings Corp. entered into a memorandum of agreement to enhance Asian Navigation and Tracking System's cellular-based applications, Person Finder and Establishment Finder. Also, the latter will pay MIC 80-percent of revenues it generated from its Location Based Services offerings to SMART.

***

WILLIAM, Gothong & Aboitiz Inc. will have a special stockholders' meeting on Dec. 18, 2 p.m. at the Makati Ballroom A & B of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders of record as of Nov. 6 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

***

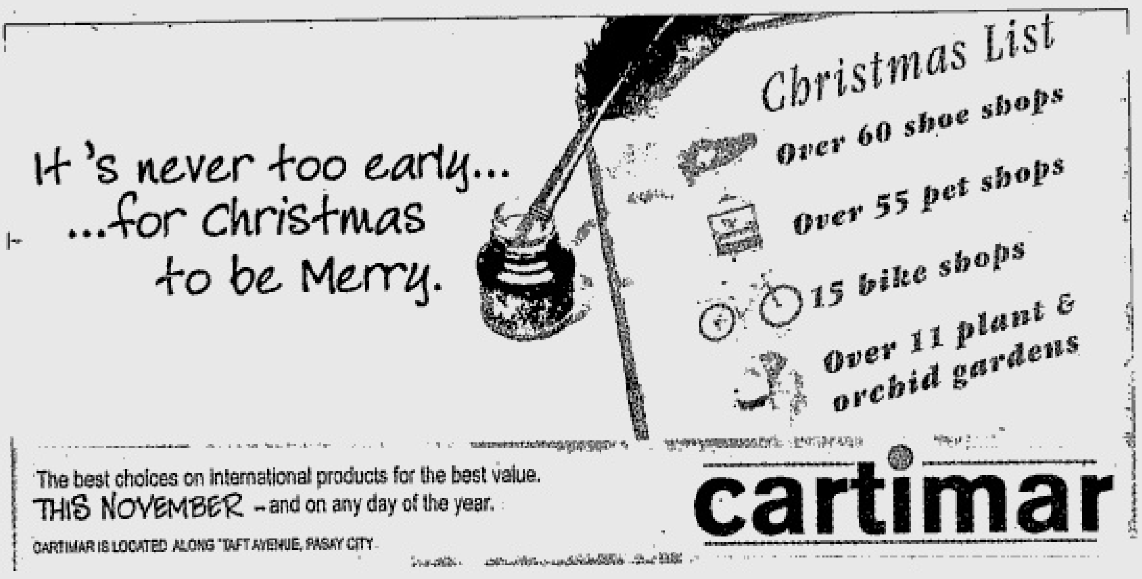
RECORD date of **Diversified Financial Network Inc.**'s pre-emptive rights offering of one right for every 2.5 shares held is on Dec. 4, 2003.

***

MABUHAY Vinyl Corp. denied having any information that can explain the unusual price movement of its shares. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

November 14, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.852442247	1.000000	55.287000
Japan	Yen	0.007887	0.009252	0.511500
United Kingdom	Pound	1.437644	1.686500	93.241500
Hongkong	Dollar	0.109824	0.128834	7.122800
Switzerland	Franc	0.637102	0.747384	41.320600
Canada	Dollar	0.655826	0.769349	42.535000
Singapore	Dollar	0.494399	0.579979	32.065300
Australia	Dollar	0.613666	0.719891	39.800600
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.26118	2.652590	146.653700
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.227312	0.266660	14.742800
Brunei	Dollar	0.492969	0.578302	31.972600
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.0001	0.000117	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.02137	0.025069	1.386000
UAE	Dirham	0.232102	0.272279	15.053500
Euro	Euro	1	1.173100	64.857200
Argentina	Peso	0.298056	0.349650	19.331100
Brazil	REAL	0.290737	0.341064	18.856400
Denmark	Kroner	0.134448	0.157721	8.719900
India	Rupee	0.018813	0.022070	1.220200
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.224357	0.263193	14.551200
Mexico	New Peso	0.076521	0.089767	4.962900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.536532	0.629406	34.798000
Norway	Kroner	0.121939	0.143047	7.908600
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015106	0.017721	0.979700
South Africa	Rand	0.127143	0.149151	8.246100
Korea	Won	0.000729	0.000855	0.047300
Sweden	Kroner	0.111707	0.131043	7.245000
Syria	Pound	0.020297	0.023810	1.316400
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025146	0.029499	1.630900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000534	0.000627	0.034700



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Customs urged to address undervaluation of imported tires

By Michelle V. Remo

THE FEDERATION of Philippine Industries has asked the Bureau of Customs to finally act on the complaint of local tire manufacturers against the alleged undervaluation of tires coming from Indonesia.

FPI president Jesus Arranza said in a statement that the Bureau of Customs' basis for the computation of the duties on Gajah Tunggal tires was no longer applicable. They were based on 1998 export prices, he said.

He added that the use of the 1998 price list was the reason the Customs Valuation Team earlier disregarded the transaction value declared by the importers of the said tire brand.

The same reason also prompted the Customs Valuation and Classification Review Committee (VCRC), another group in the BOC which is tasked to monitor valuation activities, to require importers of Indonesian tires to submit updated price lists endorsed by the Philippine commercial attache to Indonesia.

In a recent meeting with Arranza, the Philippine attache said he could not get enough information to validate the price of the Indonesian tires declared by the tire importers.

"The attache said that top officials of Gajah Tunggal were always out of the office every time he would call to request for the list of current tire prices," he said.

Without the documents that could support allegations of undervaluation, the VCRC allowed the continued importation of the Indonesian tires using the alleged undervalued price.

Local tire manufacturers then appealed the decision of the VCRC. After six months of deliberation, the petition of local tire manufacturers for an upgrade of the valuation of the Indonesian tires was elevated to the office of the Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo.

Arranza said, however, that the BOC chief has yet to come out with a decision on the local tire manufacturers' petition two years after the said petition was elevated to his office.

Arranza said the FPI was strongly supporting the petition of the local tire manufacturers because the domestic tire industry had already been severely harmed by the stiff competition brought about by cheap imports.

JANUARY TO OCTOBER

Gov't borrowings prop up BOP surplus to $160M

By Clarissa S. Batino

HEAVY borrowings by the national government and the central bank boosted the country's balance-of-payments position to a surplus of $942 million in October.

The October figure brought the 10-month BOP to a surplus of $159 million, from a deficit position in the first nine months.

The October BOP position reflected a big improvement from a deficit of $339 million a year ago, although the 10-month surplus was 61 percent lower than the $412 million registered in the same period last year.

In the first nine months, the external payments posted a deficit of $783 million.

A BOP surplus should help improve the peso as it indicated that the inflow of dollars were greater than the funds leaving the country.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the surplus was due to the borrowings of the government and the BSP.

The central bank borrowed $500 million worth of three-year funds from a syndicate of more than 20 banks while the government issued $1.05 billion worth of 10-year and 22-year global bonds last month.

"While the account breakdown is not yet available, we know that the national government and the BSP went to the bond and loan markets during the month. This helped the BOP," said Tetangco in an interview.

Closely-watched by investors, the BOP indicates the country's ability to settle its obligations. It is influenced by two items: Current account, which reflects the movement in trade, and the capital and financial account, which mirrors the flow of investments and borrowings.

The BOP position is calculated using two indicators—net international reserves and revaluation of gold.

This year, the BSP estimated that the BOP deficit would reach $1.15 billion while the current account would yield a surplus of $1.7 billion. For 2004, the BSP is expecting the BOP to hit a surplus of $1.7 billion and the current account surplus to drop to $1.1 billion.

The revised outlook for 2004 was based on expectations that exports would grow by 10 percent and imports by 11 percent from last year's 3 percent and 8 percent, respectively.

The central bank is counting on government borrowings and a mild growth in exports to help boost the dollar reserves as well as the external payments position.

While the government had reduced its external borrowings this year by $500 million to only $1.9 billion, it had pre-funded about $1 billion of its $1.8-billion funding requirement for next year.

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2003	BMW 318i	Orient Blue	Black Fabric	10k	1,690,000.00	Sold
2003	BMW 318i	Steel Gray	Black Fabric	10k	1,690,000.00	
2003	BMW 318i	Oxford Green	Black Leather	13k	1,950,000.00	
2002	BMW 325i	Oxford Green	Beige Leather	17k	2,100,000.00	
2003	BMW 325i	Titanium Silver	Gray Leather	9k	2,350,000.00	
2003	BMW 325i	Titanium Silver	Gray Leather	9k	2,350,000.00	
2003	BMW 325i	Black Sapphire	Beige Leather	9k	2,350,000.00	
2003	BMW 525i	Charetto Red	Beige Leather	7k	2,850,000.00	
2003	BMW X5 3.0d	Titanium Silver	Gray Leather	1k	4,380,000.00	Sale Pending

Other Pre-Owned BMWs

Year	Model	Color	Interior Color	Mileage	Price	Status
1996	BMW 316i	Cosmos Black	Black Fabric	47k	620,000.00	Sold
1997	BMW 316i	Alpine White	Black Fabric	60k	680,000.00	
1996	BMW 523i	Arktis Silver	Black Leather	80k	1,350,000.00	Sale Pending
1997	BMW 523i	Aspen Silver	Black Leather	50k	1,450,000.00	Sale Pending
1999	BMW 520i	Arktis Silver	Black Leather	19k	1,875,000.00	

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AEV keen on Transco subtransmission lines

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. is planning to buy power subtransmission lines and a mini-hydro generation complex that are up for privatization to boost the firm's power business.

Erramon I. Aboitiz, AEV executive vice president and chief operating officer, said in an interview that the company was interested in two to three subtransmission lines in Pampanga and Davao City.

The Energy Regulatory Commission last month approved the guidelines governing the privatization of National Transmission Corp.'s subtransmission assets.

Transco hopes to raise P6 billion from the sale of these assets.

The lines that are used to deliver electricity from power generators to distribution utilities are called transmission assets, while those used to get power from the utilities to end-users are classified as sub-transmission assets.

"We are buying only those located in our franchise areas in Pampanga and Davao since we are the only one using those lines," Aboitiz said.

The Aboitiz group owns 43.4 percent of the San Fernando Electric Light and Power Co. in Pampanga and 99.91 percent of Davao Light and Power Co. Inc.

Also, the official said AEV was planning to buy National Power Corp.'s Talomo mini-hydro complex in Davao City, which started operations in the late 1950s.

The government plans to sell early next year the four-unit Talomo complex, which has a total capacity of 3.5 MW.

AEV subsidiary Hydro Electric Development Corp. currently has seven mini-hydro plants in Benguet and one in Davao.

SMC to pick banks for loan worth $300M

SAN MIGUEL Corp., Southeast Asia's largest food and beverage group, has asked a group of eight banks to arrange a $200-$300-million, five-year loan, debt market news service Basis Point said yesterday.

Bankers did not yet know the purpose of the loan and said it could be for general working capital, capital expenditure or even for the buyout of a company, Basis Point said.

San Miguel has been looking to expand into Australia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam, it said.

The eight banks are ABN Amro Bank, BNP Paribas, Citigroup, HSBC, ING Bank, JPMorgan, Standard Chartered Bank and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp.

Basis Point said if all eight banks could get credit approval to underwrite the deal at San Miguel's requested terms, a formal mandate could be awarded as early as next week.

All of the banks were said to have strong relationships with the borrower.

San Miguel has in recent years aggressively expanded its business through buyouts. Since 2000, it has bought J. Boag & Son, Sugarland Beverage Corp., Pure Foods Corp., Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. and Cosmos Bottling Corp. *Reuters*

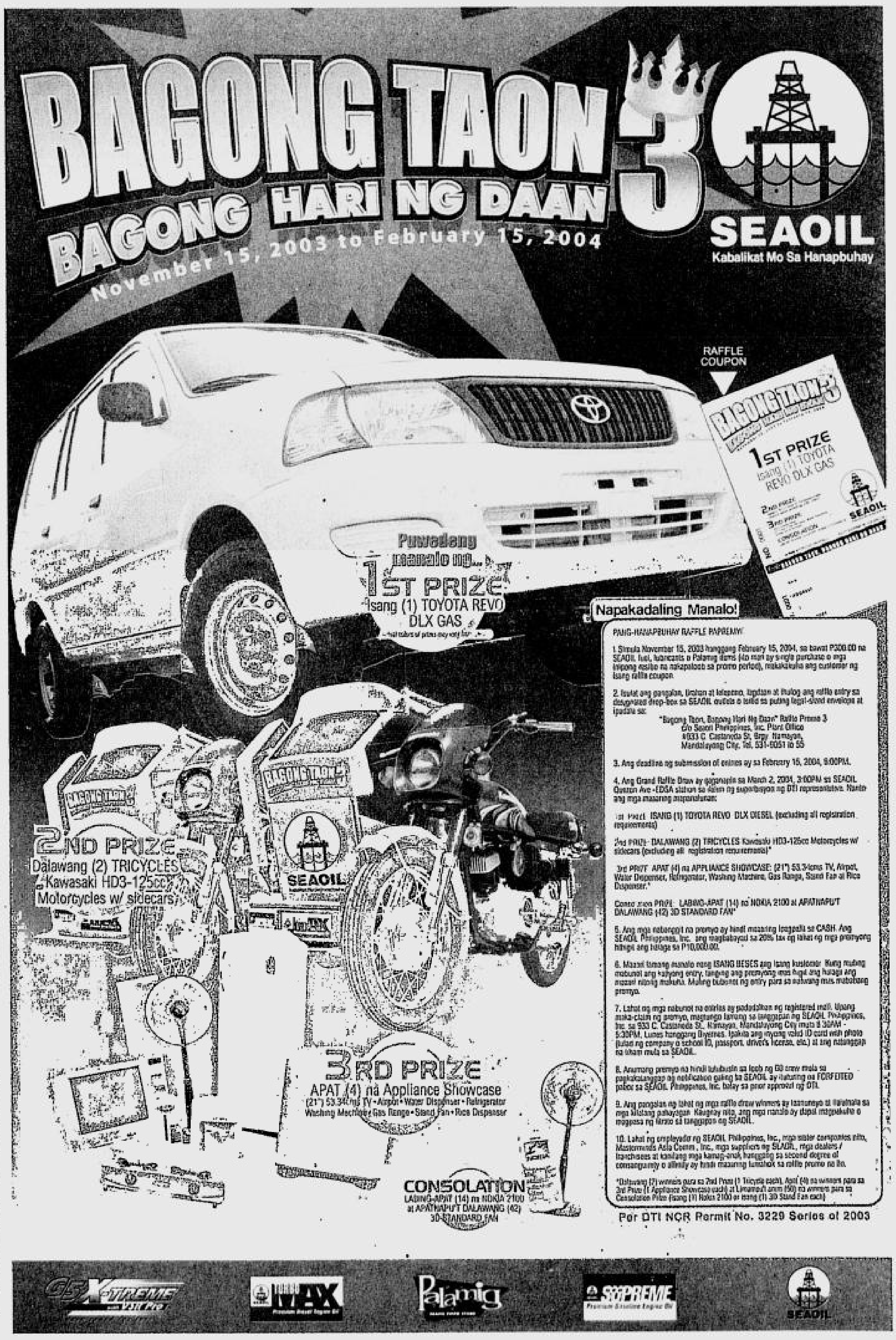
End to gin row sought

A CONSUMER group has called for the speedy resolution of the gin branding controversy amid concerns over the slow progress of the case.

The Isabela-based Timpuyog Mannalon Amianan made the call before the Mandaluyong Regional Trial Court (RTC) warning that "attempts to delay the case might constrain us to prematurely make our own conclusion on the issue."

Consumer activist and Timpuyog spokesperson Melany Victoria issued the statement in the wake of the recent issuance of a temporary restraining order (TRO) by the Court of Appeals (CA) against the Mandaluyong RTC judge hearing the P100-million suit filed by Ginebra San Miguel Inc. (GSMI) versus TDI for alleged trademark infringement and unfair competition.

The TRO was issued upon the petition of TDI to stop the lower court from implementing a preliminary injunction issued against TDI. The TRO also directed GSMI to comment on the petition and TDI's application for Preliminary Injunction.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Isang (1) TOYOTA REVO DLX GAS
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SEAOIL
3RD PRIZE
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People, Events & Products

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Over P2M in prizes from Talk 'n Text and Motorola promo

BUYING mobile phone units from Motorola authorized dealers has never been this rewarding. Aside from getting a warranty for a genuine unit, customers also get a chance to win cash prizes instantly. Motorola recently forged a partnership with Smart, Talk 'n Text, Cellstar Philippines and Comworks Inc for the new Motorola T190 promo "Motorush for Cash".

"Motorush for Cash: Talk 'n Text Motorola T190 promo gives customers and selling agents a chance to win over P2 million in cash prizes tax free daily and monthly," said Ellen Suarez, Motorola's marketing manager for consumer solutions group-South Asia.

She added that the partnership aims to eliminate unauthorized dealers and ensure that only genuine units will be accommodated by Smart, the widest network service provider with over 3,300 cell sites nationwide.

Motorola's personal communications sector has been urging consumers to buy cellphones from authorized dealers only. There is a proliferation of unauthorized dealers in the country, she said, adding that a lot of Filipinos are being deceived by these culprits.

Suarez cited some of the disadvantages of buying cellphones from unauthorized dealers such as the absence of a warranty and possibility that one was buying a second hand unit. "We are encouraging resellers and consumers to buy units from authorized dealers. It should be value for money. In the end, users will spend more in repairs and the few pesos that have been initially saved will go to nothing," she said.

Motorola's T190 model has group SMS capabilities that can send a single SMS to ten recipients at one send. Also affordably priced, the T190 is popular to today's young generation because of its animated icons and screensavers. A sample of animated icons is a flower, which you can attach a note with before sending it to your loved one. There are also over 25 animated icons to choose from like flowers, smileys and a lot more.

The T190 can accommodate 765 characters for more convenient texting. With its 20 preset phrases and five customizable personal messages, this phone makes it simple and easy to send SMS.

Chatting is also possible with this phone. Users can chat in absolute privacy and initiate or accept incoming chat requests. This is surely exploring a new world of communications with SMS chat.

When bored, three exciting games are available: Snakes, Tetris and Box World.

For personalization, T190 allows users to customize caller groups and assign ring tones and SMS alerts for groups of friends and acquaintances. It also has six lifestyle profiles that enable users to customize phone setting. Users going to the movies can simply activate the pre-set profile, activating silent ringer tones and alerts that have been restored. The T190 has 27 pre-set alert tones, and an additional 12 ring tones that can be downloaded via SMS.

Navigating is also made easy with its list-based Quick Access menu and nine customizable shortcuts to frequently used functions. Ergonomically designed and compact, the T190 is the perfect buddy for texting, considering that the Philippines is the texting capital of the world.

Local student tackles global concerns

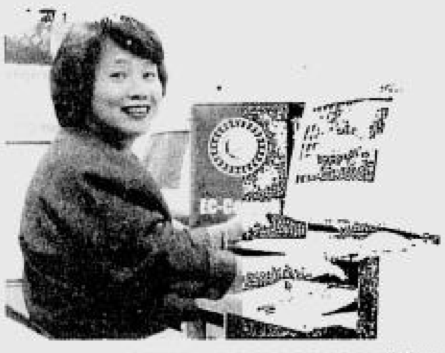
AARON Christopher Layusa recently represented the future of our country at the Global Young Leaders Conference (GYLC) last July 31, 2003 in Washington, DC and New York. The GYLC is a challenging leadership development program for high school students from around the world who demonstrate leadership potential and strong scholastic skills. Layusa was among 350 outstanding scholars to attend the conference, which explored international politics, finance, culture and diplomacy with key world leaders and newsmakers.

"Students like Aaron Christopher Layusa, who participate in the Global Young Leaders Conference, are actively seeking out opportunities to better lead countries around the world," said Mike Lasday, executive director of the Congressional Youth Leadership Council (CYLC), the organization that sponsors GYLC. "In upcoming years, answering the threat of terrorism and global epidemics such as Aids and Sars as well as building and maintaining coalitions will fall on the shoulders of these young leaders. There is no doubt that learning about today's leaders will equip these outstanding individuals to ensure a better future for our world.

"We must all commit to working with people of differing cultures," said Dr. Gary Weaver, professor of international communication at The American University. "This is part of our new reality. As we step further and further into the 21st century, you may not always agree with other cultures, but if you expect to be a leader, it is your obligation to understand them."

In addition to a list of fascinating speakers, GYLC explored the centers of world diplomacy and finance, making stops at the US Department of State, the United Nations and various embassies, including Azerbaijan, Hungary, Brazil, Jordan and Vietnam, among others. GYLC culminated in the Global Summit, which took place in the United Nations and assigned roles of world leaders to students during an international crisis simulation.

CYLC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan leadership education organization. Founded in 1985, CYLC is committed to educating, motivating and inspiring young people to achieve their full leadership potential. To date, more than 100,000 students have taken part in CYLC programs. For additional information on GYLC, visit www.cylc .org.



NEW CERTIFIED ETHICAL HACKER

Marina Dean, a certified information systems auditor of the US-based Ernst & Young, one of the graduates of the first batch of the Certified Ethical Hackers (CEH) Program of Informatics Philippines, beams as she takes time out after receiving her certificate from Informatics president and CEO Leo Riingen in recent rites at the Informatics International College (IIC) in Ortigas, Pasig City. Dean, who has been in San Francisco, California for 12 years, was here on a brief vacation as a 'balikbayan', when she attended the CEH course last Sept. 29 to Oct. 3. The next CEH classes will be held on Nov. 17 to 21 at Informatics Makati. For inquiries, call 893-4818/635-3608 or email ceh@informatics.com.ph.

Bits Clips

5th Angel Sent Bazaars

THE EDSA Shangri-La Hotel lower lobby is the venue of the 5th Angel Sent Bazaars on Nov. 15 and 16 and Dec. 20 and 21. The bazaar this year gathers the best holiday suggestion from around the country as it features products from the small and medium enterprise, manufacturers and exporters, and select imported products. Two special focus of the bazaars are the display of this years candle design awards finalists and the celebrity bazaaristas, as the personalities from television and movies become sellers. Also available are products from the religious organizations and NGOs. The 5th Angel Bazaars is organized by Philtrade Exhibits. For details, call 820-7879, 820-1570.

Emjoi now in the Phils

JERM Marketing, a premier company specializing in beauty and total wellness products, has recently been awarded the exclusive distributorship of Emjoi brand of personal care products. Designed to be used in any sensitive part of the body (legs, face, bikini line), Emjoi assures extra-gentle, non-irritating and pain-free epilation or hair removal that goes to the root. The 24-karat tweezer-like gold-plated discs mounted on its curved surface follows the body's contour for an added comfort and luxury. Hair as short as 0.55 mm can be effectively removed by Emjoi, so it can be used again a day after shaving. Miniature weights are also added to deliver a micro massage, making epilation a pleasant experience. For inquiries, call or visit Jerm Marketing at 838-1631 to 32, located at Unit 205 VFD-MDC Bldg. 2 Veterans Center, Taguig, Metro Manila.

UAAP rivalry with a twist

UAAP rivalry is intensifying, and spreading beyond the cage tournament. As usual, the culprits are Ateneo de Manila and La Salle Greenhills, but their lady school kins from Maryknoll and St. Scholastica are weighing in. It's shaping up into a showdown that takes the form of 'Tapatan 03, Rivals United', a fund-raising reunion gig of '72 and '73 high school batches from all four schools on Nov. 15 at the Hardrock Cafe, Glorietta 3 in Makati City. The alumni will re-live their hormone-raging days and outdo each other in mixing it up again to the compelling tunes of the '70s and '80s. Event secretariat may be contacted at 843-9349 and 50 (look for Judee, Remy and Belinda).

F1 racer guest at Slipstream

FORMULA One driver Allan McNish will be in Manila at the North Parking area of The Fort, Taguig today as Mild Seven caps off its "Slipstream" F1 raffle promo by giving away 8 all-expense-paid trips to the 2004 Malaysian Grand Prix and hundreds of original F1 premium items. Mild Seven will also bring in its multi-million dollar RS23B F1 race car. To win the grand prize, participants must be present during the grand draw. The event is strictly for persons 18 years-old and above.

Masaito Investors' Night at the Enclaves

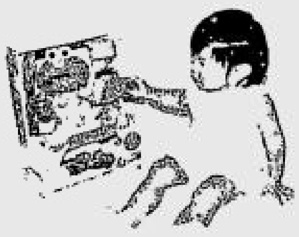
MASAITO Development Inc will hold an Investors' Night at the Enclaves at Brentwood today. The affair coincides with the completion of two of the four model units being constructed. The events event starts at 5 p.m. A special promo discount of P200,000 is given to all buyers who shall reserve on the day itself. The enclaves at Brentwood is a flagship project of Masaito Development Corp located within Brentwood Village, an existing, first class subdivision in Mabalacat, Pampanga. New brokers are welcome for accreditation. For inquiries, call 759-2441 (Makati Ofc) or (045)331-8573 (Mabalacat Ofc).

LSGH CUE Drama stages 'Man of La Mancha'

THE LA Salle Greenhills Alumni Association (LSGHAA) together with LSGH Class '78 will be sponsoring CUE Drama club's adaptation of Man of La Mancha, tonight, 7 p.m. at Teatro Aguinaldo/AFP Theater, Camp Aguinaldo. CUE Drama Club is the in-house theater group of LSGH. For tickets, call LSGHAA at 726-6339/721-2729 or at the theater gate. Man of La Mancha is sponsored by Unionbank, Visa, Ambi Pur Air Freshner, Value Vision, First Gas Power, CAP, Llao Brothers '75 '76 and '78, Paragon Consultancy and Bobby Barriero.

ProductFILES

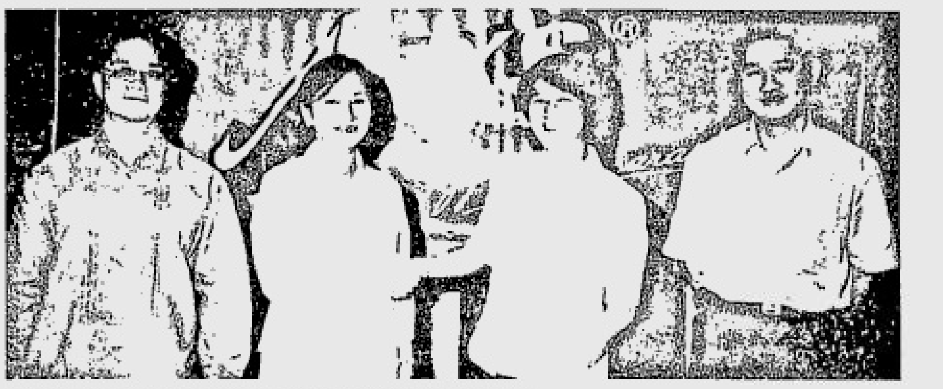
Limbo Rock with Elmo



WHAT could be a more perfect start to a wonderful childhood than Sesame Street and Babies? With Sesame Street Softies, it is not hard to develop a soft spot for these cuddly characters. Try Limbo Elmo. Elmo Limbo by Fisher Price. Limbo Elmo wears a wild Hawaiian shirt and cute little sandals. Limbo Elmo comes with an extendable limbo stick that develops your child's sense of coordination. Limbo Elmo. Elmo Limbo, is now available at leading department stores and toy stores nationwide. Fisher Price is exclusively distributed by Richwell Trading and Corporation. For more information, call 732-5141 to 47 local 209.

DOE LIGHTING TEST FACILITY GETS ISO CERTIFICATION

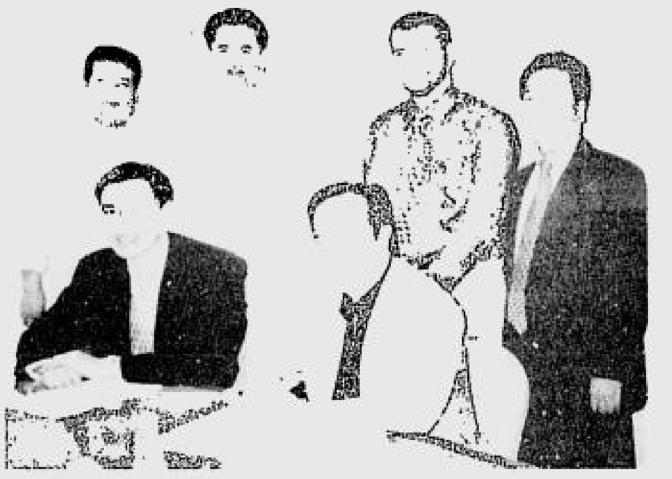
The Department of Energy (DOE) receives the PNS /ISO 17025 Certification on the Lighting Appliance Testing Laboratory (LATL) from the Department of Trade and Industry-Bureau of Product Standards (DTI-BPS) in Diliman, Quezon City, making it a world-class testing facility. The Efficient Lighting Initiative, the global market transformation program for efficient lighting technologies, provided the LATL with technical assistance in this PNS/ISO certification process in order to prepare the laboratory for the lighting product testing requirements of the local and global markets. Shown in photo during the awarding ceremonies are (from left) DTI-BPS Laboratory Accreditation Scheme Division chief Perla Baje, DTI-BPS assistant director Cirila Botor, DTI-BPS director Jesus Motoomull, DOE Secretary Vincent Perez, DOE-Energy Research and Testing Laboratory Services director Raquel Huliganga, and DOE undersecretary Eduardo Mañalac.



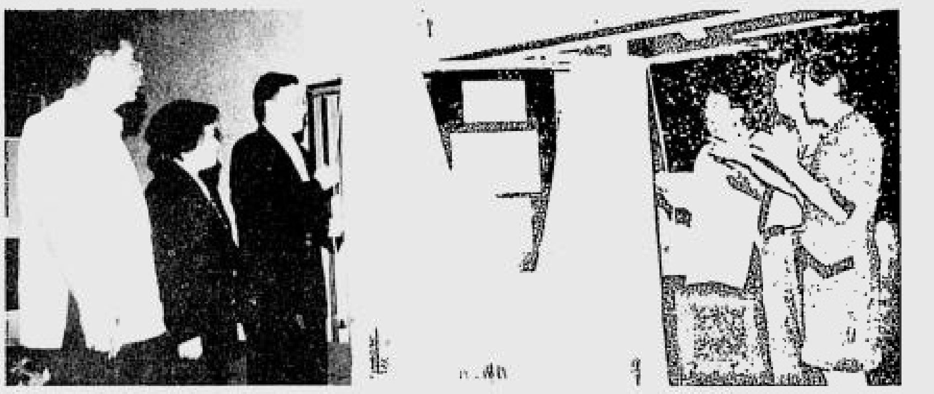
FIVE MAX'S RESTAURANTS IN BULACAN

Max's Franchising Inc (MFI) proudly announces that there will be five Max's Restaurant branches to serve the Bulaceños in November. The newest addition to the growing family is Max's SM Marilao. Shown in photo are: Robert Ocampo, MFI chief operating officer; franchisee Gail Santos; MFI president Sharon Fuentebella and Max's SM Marilao managing director Patrick Aguilar. Other Max's Restaurant franchise branches in Bulacan are in Malolos, Pulilan, Guiguinto and Meycauayan. For information on franchising, call Max's Franchising Inc at 832-1991 loc. 150 and look for Lance Zafra or visit the website at www.maxschicken.com.

BERKLEY, PERMANENT PLANS INK MOA

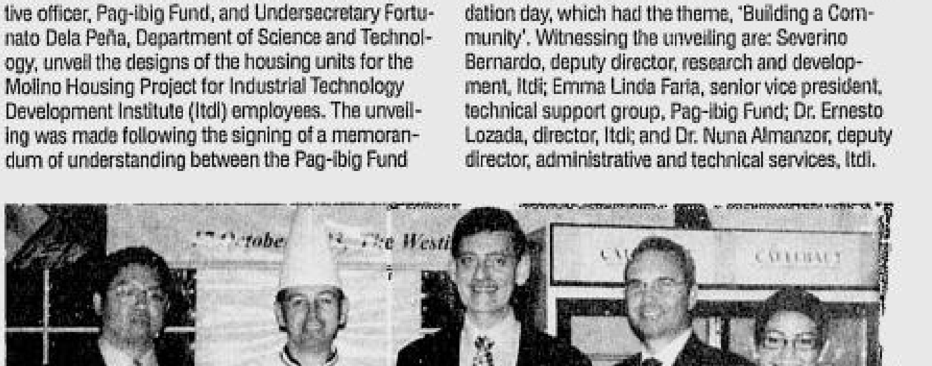


Berkley International Life Insurance Co Inc (BIL) and Permanent Plans Inc recently signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) at the Berkley Headquarters located at the Enterprise Center in Makati. The partnership authorizes Permanent Plans to distribute life insurance products to be provided by Berkley Life. Berkley Life is licensed with the Insurance Commission to develop and sell a full range of insurance products for the individual and corporate markets. Berkley's alliance with Permanent Plans is to further cover the expanding market in need of life insurance in the country. Photo shows Luie Dy Buncio, president of Berkley International Life and lawyer Juan Miguel Vazquez, president of Permanent Plans during the contract signing. They are flanked by senior officers of both companies led by Gary Castro, second from left, who is Berkley's corporate markets manager.



BUILDING A COMMUNITY THROUGH PAG-IBIG DIRECT FINANCING

Lawyer Romero Quimbo, president and chief executive officer, Pag-ibig Fund, and Undersecretary Fortunato Dela Peña, Department of Science and Technology, unveil the designs of the housing units for the Molino Housing Project for Industrial Technology Development Institute (Itdi) employees. The unveiling was made following the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Pag-ibig Fund and the Itdi during the celebration of its 102nd Foundation day, which had the theme, 'Building a Community'. Witnessing the unveiling are: Severino Bernardo, deputy director, research and development, Itdi; Emma Linda Faria, senior vice president, technical support group, Pag-ibig Fund; Dr. Ernesto Lozada, director, Itdi; and Dr. Nuna Almanzor, deputy director, administrative and technical services, Itdi.



CALLEBAUT GOURMET CHOCOLATE PRODUCTS LAUNCHED

Callebaut Gourmet Chocolate Products, which are exclusively distributed in the Philippines by F/S Xchange, the food service division of Actron Industries Inc, were formally presented to the Philippine Hospitality Industry during a cocktail launching held last Oct. 17 at the Westin Philippine Plaza. Belgian Ambassador to the Philippines Christiaan Tanghe lent his support by gracing the occasion and is shown in photo with (from left) Jason Foo, Callebaut area sales manager for gourmet and industrial chocolate; chef Philippe Vancayseele, worldwide technical advisor and demonstrator of Barry Callebaut, NV; Ambassador Christiaan Tanghe; Paul Halliwell, Callebaut director for gourmet sales; and F/S Xchange food service manager Jennie de Jesus.

Business sector's anger unlikely to bring change

CONGRESS has laws in the works to tackle serious problems—a bloated budget deficit, outdated tax rules and a corruption-riddled bureaucracy.

And that's where the proposed laws will stay for the foreseeable future, in a Congress that has passed a record low number of laws as it has lurched from scandal to scandal.

Politicians debate whether to impeach the nation's top judge while the peso nears all time lows and government bonds slide. Wary investors are taking their cash elsewhere.

The political noise is blamed on pre-election jostling but business people don't see an improvement even after voters choose a president in May next year.

"We are more than dismayed. We are outraged by this whole thing," Guillermo Luz, the head of the Makati Business Club, told Reuters.

"We see this as an abuse of power."

Instead of tax policy minutiae, the buzz in Congress is about "night crawlers," politicians trying to convince colleagues to withdraw an allegation that Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide misused court funds.

The military is on red alert for destabilization attempts and the run-up to elections in May is shaping up to be a long circus.

No changes seen

Few believe the anger among business people will translate into change in May's election—as they cast around for a business-friendly candidate in the mould of Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra.

Boosted by Thaksin's spending programs, Thailand has left the Philippines trailing as it combines political stability with high growth rates and a strengthening currency.

Eduardo Cojuangco, the chair of beer and food conglomerate San Miguel Corp., is usually cited as a potential business-friendly candidate, but he has said he would run.

Cojuangco heads the Nationalist People's Coalition party, which officially backs Arroyo's government but has crossed the president by leading the impeachment move against Davide.

San Miguel Corp. has lost several Supreme Court cases.

Young Congressmen from rich families have promoted the impeachment, rather than addressing other matters, a fact that fits one theory of why Philippine politicians do so little to improve the lot of the nation's 82 million people.

Many argue the elite few hundred families that dominate the country have limited interest in reforms to open up their businesses to competition or to plug holes in a leaky tax system.

Logic lost?

Personal vendettas, old grudges and ambition seem to take precedence over the national interest, as the peso nears a record low of 55.75 to a dollar.

That low was hit in January 2001 when people power ousted President Joseph Estrada and thrust Arroyo into the job.

"That's the sad part about it—these people are not thinking of their country but of their own futures," said Peter Wallace, head of a business consultancy in Manila, referring to those pushing for Davide's ouster.

Others have given up on logical explanations.

"I'm not sure what their reasons are any more," said Luz.

Investors vote with their wallets. Foreign direct investment in the second quarter was down 73 percent on a year earlier.

Spreads on Philippine government bonds, the premiums over US Treasuries that show investors' assessment of risk, have blown out. When the impeachment row erupted last month the spread on 2014 bonds jumped 0.75 percentage point, although it has since regained half the lost ground.

Nil confidence

A survey of business leaders by Wallace's consultancy found confidence in politicians had sunk to almost zero even before the impeachment row.

Of 62 chief executives, half thought Congress was doing a terrible job, with 32 percent rating its performance as poor.

Nobody rated the Congress even as well as "fair."

One bill languishing in Congress aims at overhauling the main tax agency, which fails to collect around P220 billion in revenue every year, largely due to evasion and corruption.

Other proposed laws should also help improve the tax take and rein in a government deficit seen hitting P200 billion this year.

Asia's largest sovereign debt issuer outside Japan, the Philippines owes around $57 billion, 74 percent of annual GDP.

"We are facing a potentially very serious situation on the budget deficit and the public sector debt," said Wallace.

"They are reaching quite critical levels—levels that in other countries have indicated potential for a default."

Some voice hope for improvement after May's election if Arroyo is re-elected, giving her a democratic mandate.

But investors are worried the poll could spring more nasty surprises. Among potential candidates are an ageing film star and a former police chief accused of murder.

Donald Dee, the head of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, said parties must stop backing candidates for their popularity with no thought to their experience.

"As a political party, you don't back candidates you know are not qualified," he said. "It's very insulting to the Philippine people."

Reuters

CONGRESS in session

JOAN BONDOC

Digitel taps Alcatel, Ericsson for expansion

By Abigail L. Ho

GOKONGWEI-OWNED Digitel Mobile Philippines Inc. has awarded two contracts worth $150 million to telecommunications suppliers Alcatel and Ericsson to boost the number of its cell sites to more than 1,000 by next year.

Digitel Mobile chief executive Charles Lim said in an interview that with the completion of the first two phases of the company's network rollout by year's end, the awarding of the Phase 3 contract would signal the doubling of its Sun Cellular brand's capacity and coverage in the coming months.

"Sun Cellular's 1800 GSM (global system for mobile communications) network is currently operating and is provisioning services in key cities nationwide. The fast rollout of phases 1 and 2 will be completed in 2003," he said.

The Equity Research arm of Credit Suisse First Boston stated in an Oct. 30 report that French telecommunications firm Alcatel would take care of network buildout in Luzon, while Swedish firm Ericsson would be responsible for the rollout in the Visayas and Mindanao areas.

The first two phases of Digitel Mobile's network rollout entailed the establishment of 681 cell sites all over the country. These cell sites have a capacity of one million subscribers.

Phase 3 would increase this number to more than 1,000 and at the same time boost network capacity to accommodate about two million subscribers.

In an earlier interview, Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc. chief finance officer Jaime Cabangis said about half of the funding for the Phase 3 network would come from bank loans while the balance would be taken from internally generated funds and suppliers' credit.

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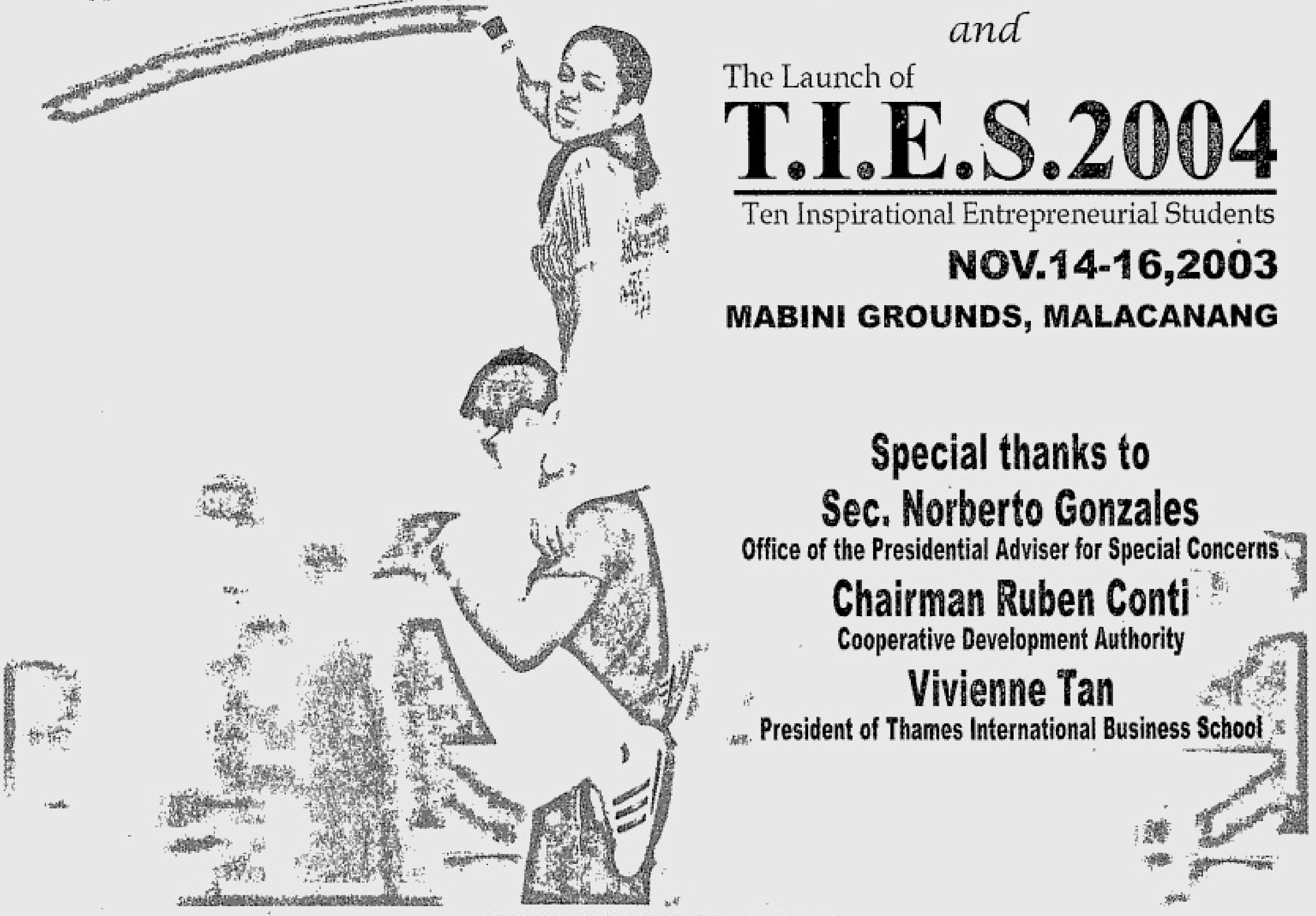

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SAN DINISIO 2 Stry P1.9M LA200/m² FA 323/m² 9Bdrms 7 T&B Vic 8903461 loc 27

PASIG

DE CASTRO SUBD 2Stry P1.8M LA321/m² FA271/m² 6Bdrms 2T&B Vic 8903461loc27

V. VERDE 3
4br SPool Den Call 6316649

QUEZON CITY

Capitol Hills Golf Subd. Q.C. 9312022 / 09178161862

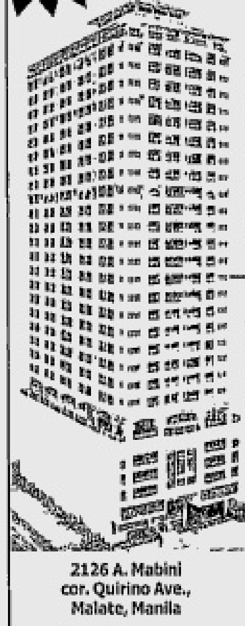
H&L 2STY ATIC L448 F710 3BRTB INDOOR GARDEN 4CGRG 38M CAPITOL HILLS GOLF SUBD AYALA HGTS QC C 0918-7137346 • T433-6619

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

Now at Finishing Stage!!



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2126 A. Mabini
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Malate, Manila

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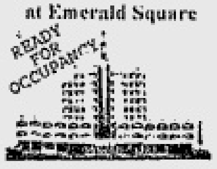
Text 0917-5020673

Enjoy magnificent sunset view at the pool deck

QUEZON CITY

The
TOWER
at Emerald Square



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QUEZON CITY

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P381,000/unit condo 2Kms fr. SM Fairview 30sqm thru Pag-ibig 8179650 / 9750 / 0919-8994322

PROJ.6 BNEW 9263307

•Sikatuna9210255/9219967•

STA. MESA HEIGHTS
472.5m² Call Ailin
3302116/17•0917-8101680

Teachers Village 5BR 4TB 2Car Grge 9115476 9132701

SAN JUAN

Ghills 968sqm 5BR N-East 0917-3262553 • 700-3378

LAGUNA

LAGUNA BEL-AIR LA132/m² 3bdrms 2T&B FA84/m² P1.85M Vic 8903461 loc27/25

MILAN CAMELLA HOMES 3Stry FA 210/m² LA 78/m² P1.9M Vic 8903461 loc 27/25

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

CONDO/TWNHSE

MANILA

RIZAL

Grand Open House
Nov. 15 & 16, 2003
Avail big discounts & buyers promo

P1M - UP
Birmingham
SUNRISE
San Mateo, Rizal
50m² up
HOMES
M.L. Quezon Ext.
Antipolo City
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Belen - 6550134
Homebankers - 4378104
Human Shelter- 947-0325

CONDO/TWNHSE

56.29 WACK2 Royal Mansion 1BR renovated A1 w/ jacuzzi 2.8M T- 825-9564

MAKATI

1.6M C5 Nr The Fort
12T/mo. or 3Yrs No Int. or 10% D.P. LIPAT AGAD 2-4BR 15min Fr Mkti 0917-8169849

MKT NR AYALA
BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/2tb/grge P3.435M 8903461 loc 34

MANILA

930T nr UST 0920-8309744

ESPANA TOWER
nr UST 0920-9112910

NR LA SALLE TAFT
BnewTwnhse/3stry/3br/3tb/grge P3.295M 8903461 loc 34

MANDALUYONG

RUSH SALE EDSA CONDO 2br 3tb 1pkg gym pool sauna jacuzzi 0918-5179690

PASIG

Condo Malayan Plaza ADB Ave. Bside Discovery 0917-5218338

Condo nr Mkt/Ortigas, 1.7M only 10%DP Move-in, 2-4BR Rent to own, 09173242185

RUSH ! VV1-3.7M
112m² 2BR 4attic cor. rdy 4 OC 9135373 - 4363059 DBO

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

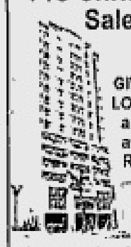
CONDO/TWNHSE

QUEZON CITY

2BR CUBAO P1M 9120679

CUBAO 1.4M 10%DP 9132224

PYP MANSION II
Pre-Christmas Sale!!!



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SAN JUAN

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LOT

KALOOCAN

RAINBOW VILLAGES LA216m² P3475/m² Vic 8903461 loc 25

LAS PINAS

BF Resort Tropical Road 313sqm (042)9111749

TALON 204m²@P4,000 639-1694 / 0917-8102903

PASIG

METROVILLE SUBD LA 333m² P4,054/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

QUEZON CITY

LOYOLA GRAND VILLAS choice lots w/ view 426-5650•929-1832

VILLA ESPA—A LA108.50m² P12,000/m² Vic8903461loc27

Xaviervill 2 Nice Loc 17,000T /sqm Call 645-3731

RIZAL

Twn&Cntry Hts 150m² 500T Rush Sale lowest price Irene 7346262 / 09192354645

OTHER AREAS

TOWN & CNTRY HILLS LA240m² P3,125/m² Vic 8903461loc 27

BATANGAS

RANCHO VISTA SUBD LA613m² P2,284/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

TAAL BTGS 200mtrs from Diversion Rd LA6794m² P185.50/m² Vic8903461loc27

BULACAN

SAN MIGUEL LA 4000m² P160/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

TOWN & COUNTRY LA 180m² P2,900/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

CAVITE

DON BOSCO EXEC HTS LA128m² P2,900/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

ST. CHARBEL EXEC VILLAGE LA371m² P2,650/m² Vic/Gigie 8903461 loc 72 or 25

LAGUNA

Sacrifice Sale Laguna Bel Air 1 155m² 5,800/m² Neg. 7880905 nr Brent

SOUTH PEAK P5,000/m² LA240m² Vic8903461loc25/27

OFFICE SPACE

MKT OFFICE SPACE
2,508SQM @ P180/SQM
0916-3725706 • 9284431

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

FARM/FISHPEN/ RAWLANDS

Rush Piggery w/ECC 9522109

TAAL BTGS 200mtrs from Diversion Rd LA6794m² P185.50/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

BULACAN

SAN MIGUEL LA 4000m² P180/m² Vic 8903461 loc 27

RIZAL

24has. adj spring/Pililla River, Ideal for farm lot/ subd./orchard/poultry/ piggery P160/m² nego 911-5631 • 911-0735

FACTORY/WHSE

Cebu Factory Warehse Bldg. Almost 1 Hec. P25M Neg. Terms 09189167396 Ray

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

HOUSE

MAKATI

1416 Newton St. 5788063

MANDALUYONG

Ghills 5BrPool 120T 7247349

PASIG

V. VERDE 3
4br SPool Den Lanai 6316649

VV6 5BR FF Garden 6310541

SAN JUAN

2BIG b/rm 1md 1storage 1 bath BIGyard STRONG H2° 7003328

CONDO/TWNHSE

MAKATI

Mkt.Studio UF 9T/FF 10T w/AC 2br 18.5Tup tel/prk •897-9417•

MANILA

NEW CONDO 2BR COR LASALLE TAFT 2558666 09189382922

MANDALUYONG

P13,500 SEMI CONDO 120M² 3BR W/ TUB W/ PARKING CALL MARLYN 5338536

PASIG

Mega Plaza 1BR FF 631-0541

QUEZON CITY

MONTGOMERY 3BR 4578041

OHT-3 2br furnish Unit 17-H East Wood City Libis 633-0164

SCT AREA 4BR NEW 4578041

APARTMENT

KALOOCAN

P3T Max 2 Per 4Ave 0979417

MAKATI

2BR APT W/ GRG #8951662

MANDALUYONG

1BR up&dwn w/garage 32 Bulalakaw hack Mun Hall P5T Tel.5334951 / 6585656

QUEZON CITY

CUBAO P3.8 LADY 9124428

DORDOSATO 70Masikap Ext 9293366 ; 9293291; 4361389

ROOM & BOARD

Mkt.Condo M/F Free Utlly 8806331

P'QUE P150 / 12hrs 827-5345

Room Mktl Lady 870-9115 7pm-Up

W/AIRCON, TB MKT 8992148

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

ROOM & BOARD

MAKATI

STUDIO TYPE UNITS 2BR PENTHOUSE #8951662

BEDSPACE

MALE BEDSPACERS @ MLA LUXURY CONDO PEARL DR ORTIGAS/CALL 0917-8341169

BUSINESS RENTAL

AYALA AVE T8181696/7586

G/F Sunshine Condo #9533 Kamagong St San Antonio Vill Makati 920-7793 / 0919-4470602

LOAN & MORTGAGE

2% W/O TAKING CAR 3677523/24

BUSN DRS OFW 524-3197

FINANCING-EASY FAST VERY PRIVATE CONVENIENT H/L BUSINESS PERSONAL Gigie /Ernie 8903461 loc25/23

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT

Table Space nr UST 7351167

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE OR RENT

COMMERCIAL

BEST COMMERCIAL SPACE IN MAKATI FOR RENT OR SALE 367sqm in Sage House Ground Flr Herrera St at PHP350 per sqm Call Beth at 2436856-7

OTHER REAL ESTATE

REALTORS/SEMINAR

Look for 100has Sta. Maria /Bocaue Bul. 0920-9112910

Looking for 1000has. Dinalupihan 0920-9112910

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

CARS

HONDA

CRV 2000 09166878481

TOYOTA

95CrlaXE FreshUSver 220T7767507

OTHER CAR BRANDS

W/ WARRANTY
★Pajero, Delica, Vans
★Serena, Caravan, Largo
★Land Cruser VX, H-Ace
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2001 AUDI A6 Highline 4D Sdn 1.8M Purchase Date June 2001 Racing Green w/ beige leather seats Comp. Insurance T'l June, 2004 New tires, Mileage 31,390 Call Aida Off hrs 9-6 Mon-Fri Tel 632-9061 / 637-3328

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

1T/Hiace 9136710/4333682

Bnew Vans 8254050 8261045

CAR VANS 410-0495

★Vans Coaster Bus 422-9296

CARS, VAN T9273453

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

CARS FOR RENT

L300 VAN 4711695 09163443087

L300 ADV. 741-1356

MB-100 7415897

Van 0917-8143792 • 6421840

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 788-0357

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% Fast Car Loan 5567685

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

2% w/oTaking Car 8870490/95

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLANS
7800106• 09177939632

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

YAMAHA GRAND & UPRIGHT
ELITE PIANO CENTER
Almost New:TERMS-7213124

OTHER EQUIPMENT

UNIC ESPRESSO MACHINE & grinder 0919-4480402

PETS

LonghairedGuineaPig5277616 Less50% on boar 20% on sow

23T [illegible] 767507

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MISCELLANEOUS

Rush 4 sale PHOTODEV SHOP Cong Ave Q.C. (0917)8427128

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MALE

DRIVER & HELPER TRAILER CARGO QC T3632579/3646194

MALE/FEMALE

OFC. MKTG.STAFF 18-45yrs old col. level/grad 9134479 Marlene

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING 4043528 5899958 5280730

JOB HIRING 09167054572 AINA

JOB HIRING 09193352395 HANA

OFC MKTNG STF 09208062187

PIGGERY ASST. MNGR *VETERINARIAN*BREEDER* Live in Batangas Area, Know English, w/4yrs up experience Text/Call Henry 0918-920-1239

• RESEARCHERS •
Col.Grad pref Pol Sci, Stat & Int'l Studies Grad/Single 20-25 Yrs. Old Contact FLOR 843-4744 Loc. 6601

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

CY LOPEZ PAWNSHOP INC.
CAEG Bldg #7611 Dela Rosa St., Makati City #602 JP Rizal St. Makati City #15 Gen. Santos Ave. lower Bicutan Taguig Real St. Almanza Uno Las Pinas City will hold an Auction Sale on November 22, 2003 at 9:00am including all items pawned up to June 2003.
- V. Zamora Jr. lic. Auctioneer
(PDI-November 15, 2003)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Sps. FRANCISCO E. GARCIA & MANUELA M. DE GARCIA; Sps. LUIS M. GARCIA & ROSARIO T. GARCIA; and MA. RITA GARCIA-ESPINOSA were settled extrajudicially by their respective heirs as per Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement and Partition among the respective heirs of the estates of deceased Sps. Francisco E. Garcia and Manuela T. Garcia, Sps. Luis M. Garcia and Rosario T. Garcia and the latter's daugther Ma. Rita Garcia-Espinosa, Doc. No.695, Page No.150, Book No.3 Series of 2003 before Levy V. Fernandez, Notary Public of Quezon City
PDI-Nov. 8, 15 & 22, 2003

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late REYNALDO AVILES & CARIDAD AVILES was settled by his heirs through an extrajudicial partition of rights as per Doc 327, Page 66, Bk LXVIII, Series of 2003 before Notary Public Primitivo C. Cruz of Taguig M. Mla.
(PDI Nov 1, 8, & 15, 2003)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late DOMINADOR ARCETA has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 264 Page No. 53 Book No. II Series of 2001 of Notary Public Benjamin Mogpo, Jr. of Quezon City.
PDI-Nov 15, 22 & 29, 2003

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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BAGUIO BZNS 09189051567

OZAMIS BZNS 09180051567

NEED X'MAS CASH
parttime bsns P20k/mo 7423327

RETIRE 2YRS 09180051567

RTW Consign 09167940002

RTW/BLOUSES P28 727-4934

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PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for security and janitorial services, supply and installation of horizontal blinds, steel shelves and conference/discussion system.

PARTICULARS	CONTRACT DURATION/AREA/QTY.	APPROVED BUDGET
1. Security Services	2/01/04-1/31/05 (43 security guards)	P 8,990,000
2. Janitorial Services	2/01/04-1/31/05 (47 janitors)	6,080,000
3. Vertical Blinds	9,191 square ft.	781,000
4. Steel Shelves	108 units	742,000
5. Conference/Discussion System	one (1) set	300,000
Source of Funding	2003 & 2004 Corporate Operating Budget	
Pre-bid Conference	November 21, 2003, 3:00 PM at the 9th Floor, PDIC Ayala Extension Office	
Deadline for the submission of Eligibility Requirements and Proposals	November 28, 2003, 1:00 PM at the 9th Floor, PDIC Ayala Extension Office	
Opening of Envelopes containing the Eligibility Requirements and Proposals	November 28, 2003, 1:30 PM at the 9th Floor, PDIC Ayala Extension Office	

The prospective bidders shall be allowed to bid for only one type of service, i.e., for security and janitorial services.

The Instructions to Bidders and the Terms of Reference shall be made available to interested bidders starting November 10 to November 20, 2003, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the BAC Secretariat, 9th Floor, PDIC Ayala Extension Office Ayala Avenue corner Herrera St., Makati City from Ms. Malou Francisco or Ms. Dhel Adole after payment of a non-refundable amount of P300.00 for each project to be bid.

Criteria for eligibility check, examination and evaluation of bids and post-qualification shall be on non-discretionary pass/fail basis.

The eligibility screening of bidders, evaluation of bids and awarding of contract shall be governed by pertinent provisions of RA 9184.

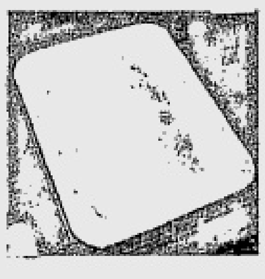
PDIC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part thereof, to waive any informality or minor defect, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

PDIC shall in no case be held responsible or liable for any and all costs associated with the bidder's participation in the bidding process regardless of its results.

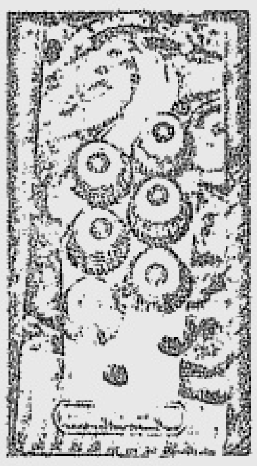
BAC-GSM

(PDI--Nov. 8 & 15, 2003)

Imported **ALUMINUM TRAYS** and
Imported **PAPER BAKING CUPS**



- with large variety of sizes
- different colors and designs (baking cups)
- suitable for baking
- best as food containers / food packaging



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NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION

South Luzon Operation & Maintenance

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

AD NO. TRANSCO 2003-0123

The National Transmission Corporation, South Luzon O&M Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) wishes to invite interested parties who are qualified to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

DATE OF BIDDING: DECEMBER 10, 2003; 10:00 AM

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER	APPROVED BUDGET
A1	5 UNITS	INSULATION RESISTANCE TEST EQPT. (5KV)	3SLR-03-077	P 2,400,000.00
	2 UNITS	OIL TEST EQUIPMENT		1,100,000.00
A2	1 SET	INSULATION RESISTANCE TESTER (10KV)	PSMD-N-03-190	620,000.00
A3	1 SET	PORTABLE RELAY TEST SET	PSMD-N-03-094	620,000.00
A4	1 SET	PORTABLE DISSOLVED GAS ANALYZER/ CHROMATOGRAPH	3PSMD-S-03-101	4,000,000.00
A5	2 SETS	MULTIMEDIA PROJECTOR	3SLR-03-088	550,000.00
A6	2 SETS	DIESEL ELECTRIC GENERATOR SET	3SLR-03-076	1,200,000.00

DATE OF BIDDING: DECEMBER 10, 2003; 2:00 PM

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER	APPROVED BUDGET
A7	1 LOT	CLIMBING GEAR & OTHER SAFETY TOOLS AND ACCESSORIES	VARIOUS PRS	637,186.00
A8	1 SET	INFRARED THERMAL SCANNER	PSMD-N-03-088	7,000,000.00
A9	8000 PCS	INSULATOR, SUSPENSION	3SLR-03-092	8,800,000.00
A10	4 SETS	SUPPLY OF LABOR & MATERIALS FOR THE INSTALLATION OF ONE (4) SETS 48V DC STATION BATTERIES	D1-03-309	1,400,000.00
	4 UNITS	BATTERY CHARGER (RECTIFIER)		2,000,000.00

NOTE : A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules on.
1) A1, A4 and A6 – November 27, 2003; 9:00 AM at SLT Bidding Room
2) A8, A9 and A10 – November 27, 2003; 2:00 PM at SLT Bidding Room

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Office of the Manager, Administration Division, SLT, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00 per schedule starting November 18, 2003. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the SLT Bidding Room, Transco-SL O&M, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna until the specified date and time of bidding above after which said bids will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "R.A. 9184".

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by GSIS or a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

The Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) G.R. LISTANO
CHAIRMAN-BAC
SL O & M -

(PDI–November 15, 2003)

POEA

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PNB

PUBLIC AUCTION

NOVEMBER 26, 2003 • WEDNESDAY • 2:00 p.m.
PENTHOUSE, B.A. LEPANTO BUILDING
PASEO DE ROXAS AVENUE, MAKATI CITY

- VALUE FOR MONEY DEALS
- GUARANTEED FINANCING
- FIXED INTEREST UP TO 10 YEARS
- 10% DOWNPAYMENT FOR LOTS
- 25% DOWNPAYMENT FOR DEVELOPED PROPERTIES

KALOOCAN CITY

Lot 1 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 298 sqm
LOT 48 B14, GOLDEN SHOWER ST., BF HOMES3
Minimum Bid Price: Php 590,000

Lot 2 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 359 sqm Floor Area: 222sqm
NINONG OSMUNDO COR NINONG FLORENTINO, BF HOMES II, DEPARO,
Minimum Bid Price: Php 790,000

QUEZON CITY

Lot 3 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 335 sqm Floor Area: 302sqm
L12F1, #2 PONCIANO BERNARDO ST., BAGONG LIPUNAN, CUBAO DIS.
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,010,000

Lot 4 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 275.7 sqm
Floor Area: 357sqm
46-A B.GONZALES ST. XAVIERVILLE SUBD., LOYOLA HEIGHTS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 6,128,000

Lot 5 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 180 sqm Floor Area: 182sqm
LOT 22-A/ BLK 145, # 28 MALAKAS ST, BGY PINYAHAN, DILIMAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,320,000

Lot 6 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 240 sqm Floor Area: 93 sqm
LOT 4 BLK 1, #45 VILLAMOR ST. DONA FAUSTINA SUBD.NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 688,000

Lot 7 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 136 sqm Floor Area: 55 sqm
L247-A-3-B-1-B, #35 MARCEL DRIVE, BAESA
Minimum Bid Price: Php 586,000

Lot 8 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 200 sqm Floor Area:133 sqm
L31B85, CANA ST. LAGRO SUBD
Minimum Bid Price: Php 780,000

Lot 9 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 329 sqm Floor Area:121 sqm
#14 ORANGE ST, ODELCO SUBD, SAN BARTOLOME, NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,244,400

Lot 10 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 232.7 sqm
Floor Area:167 sqm
L20B83, #38 INT J. ZOBEL. DIOQUINO Z OBEL, PROJECT 4
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,200,000

Lot 11 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area:176 9sqm Floor Area:107sqm
#81 INT EVANGELISTA ST BAGUMBAYAN PROJECT 4
Minimum Bid Price: Php 962,000

Lot 12 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 162.5 sqm
Floor Area: 82 sqm
L6-A-B7, STA. EDITHA ST. ST JAMES SUBD., BRGY NAGKAISANG NAYON
Minimum Bid Price: Php 706,000

Lot 13 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area:1,010 sqm Floor Area:51 sqm
16-A INT FIDELCRUZ ST. TS CRUZ SUBD, NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,316,000

Lot 14 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 270 sqm Floor Area:257 sqm
#20, 4TH CAMARILLA ST., MURPHY. CUBAO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,940,000

Lot 15 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 282 sqm Floor Area: 84 sqm
LOT 39 BLK 7, COR. BACH & ABELARDO STS. IDEAL SUBD. ,COMMONWEALTH
Minimum Bid Price: Php 750,000

Lot 16 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 267 sqm Floor Area:376 sqm
#1 ILANG-ILANG ST., SAN PEDRO 9 SUBD., BAGBAG, NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,855,000

Lot 17 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 252 sqm Floor Area:140 sqm
LOT 4 BLK 4, 15 CHOPIN ST., GREENVILLE SUBD. SAUYO, NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,360,000

Lot 18 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 181 sqm Floor Area: 76 sqm
39 SAN IGNACIO ST., BRGY. GULOD NOVALICHES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 732,000

Lot 19 – CONDO
Floor Area: 66 sqm
U407 4F MISSION GARDEN CONDO, #59 SCOUT YBARDOLAZA ST
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,586,000

Lot 20 – CONDO
Floor Area: 72.75 sqm
UNIT 404 4/F ADELINA II CONDOMINIUM, OLUMBIA COR. IMPERIAL ST., QC
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,237,000

Lot 21 – TOWNHOUSE
Lot Area: 447.7 sqm
Floor Area:205 sqm
NO 21, DON JOSE ST., BRGY SAN ROQUE, CUBAO Q.C.
Minimum Bid Price: Php 5,500,000

MANILA

Lot 22 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area:73.7sqm Floor Area: 196 sqm
B14/L1-E, HERBOSA EXT. TONDO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,215,000

Lot 23 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 52.46 sqm
Floor Area: 70 sqm
LOT 10 BLK 14-F-1, #126 C.P. GARCIA ST. DON BOSCO. TONDO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 405,000

Lot 24 – CONDO
Floor Area: 92.27 sqm
UNIT 1005 10F UNITED GROUP BLDG. CONDO. 559 JUAN LUNA, BINONDO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,950,000

SAN JUAN

Lot 25 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 106 sqm Floor Area:155 sqm
LOT 26-E, BONI SERRANO COR 5TH ST., WEST CRAME
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,165,000

MANDALUYONG CITY

Lot 26 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 68 04 sqm
Floor Area: 112 sqm
LOT 5 BLK 15, 25 CORONADO ST(INT), BGY HULO P2
Minimum Bid Price: Php 800,000

MARIKINA CITY

Lot 27 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 322 sqm
LOT 15 BLK 2, ROLLING HILLS DRIVE, MONTEREY HILLS SUBD., PARANG
Minimum Bid Price: Php 383,000

PASIG CITY

Lot 28 – CONDO
Floor Area: 152 sqm
UNIT 504, 5TH FLR CRISANTA TOWERS, CAPT JAVIER ST., BRGY. ORAMBO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 4,578,000

Lot 29 – CONDO
Floor Area: 181 sqm
UNIT 1103, 11/F MANILA LUXURY CONDO, PEARL DRIVE COR. GOLD LOOP, ORTIGAS CENTER
Minimum Bid Price: Php 5,202,000

MAKATI CITY

Lot 30 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 324 sqm Floor Area: 108sqm
1 PONTE ST., M. DELA PAZ SUBD., BRGY. SINGKAMAS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 4,600,000

TAGUIG

Lot 31 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 120 sqm
L31-B BLK 41, SPARROW ST., BAY BREEZE EXEC. VILLAGE, WAWA
Minimum Bid Price: Php 165,000

Lot 32 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 126 sqm Floor Area: 95 sqm
LOT 23 BLK 71, RAMAIN ST MAHARLIKA VIL. UPPER BICUTAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 321,000

PASAY CITY

Lot 33 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 207 sqm Floor Area: 140sqm
LOT 2, 010 (274) N.GERONIMO ST. MALIBAY
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,377,000

LAS PIÑAS CITY

Lot 34 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 324 sqm
L2-C-3, LIGAS ST. PAMPLONA TRES
Minimum Bid Price: Php 255,000

PARAÑAQUE CITY

Lot 35 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 328 sqm Floor Area: 30 sqm
CADENA DE AMOR COR ADELFA. UNITED PARAÑAQUE SUB 4
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,032,000

Lot 36 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 384 sqm Floor Area:143 sqm
LOT 6 & 8 BLK. 4, 3941 DAHLIA ST STO NINO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,700,000

Lot 37 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 280 sqm Floor Area:137 sqm
LOT 61 BLK 13, #68 FC SANTOS ST. BF HOMES PH III
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,546,000

Lot 38 – CONDO
Floor Area: 93 sqm
UNIT 1404, 14TH FLR., BAYVIEW INT'L TOWERS, TOWER I, ROXAS BLVD.
Minimum Bid Price: Php 3,260,000

Lot 39 – CONDO
Floor Area: 76.4 sqm
PENTHOUSE E ISABELLE MANSION LP LEVISTE AVE., SUN VALLEY BGY MERVILLE
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,091,000

Lot 40 – CONDO
Floor Area: 76.4 sqm
PENTHOUSE G ISABELLE MANSION LP LEVISTE AVE., SUN VALLEY BGY MERVILLE
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,091,000

Lot 41 – CONDO
Floor Area: 48 sqm
PENTHOUSE I ISABELLE MANSION LP LEVISTE AVE., SUN VALLEY BGY. MERVILLE
Minimum Bid Price: Php 686,000

MUNTINLUPA

Lot 42 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 263 sqm Floor Area: 125sqm
233 INT. NATL RD, PUROK2, B2 BAYANAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 440,000

BULACAN

Lot 43 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 2,007 sqm
L3220 A-8, BRGY. MAKINABANG, BALIUAG
Minimum Bid Price: Php 452,000

Lot 44 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 103 sqm
LOT 2-H-1, POBLACION, ANGAT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 74,400

Lot 45 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 522 sqm
LOT 2-H-3, POBLACION, ANGAT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 377,145

Lot 46 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,100 sqm
LOT 3, SAUDI SUBD., POBLACION ANGAT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 467,500

Lot 47 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,057 sqm
LOT 1531-B-5-A-2, J.P. RIZAL STREET, POBLACION, STA. MARIA
Minimum Bid Price: Php 5,708,000

Lot 48 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 233 sqm
GREEN PLAINS SUBD., SAN MARCOS , CALUMPIT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 559,000

Lot 49 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 220 sqm
GREEN PLAINS SUBD, SN MARCOS, CALUMPIT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 528,000

Lot 50 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 200 sqm
LOT 14 BLK 8, EUCALYPTUS ST., GREEN PLAINS SUBD., SAN MARCOS, CALUMPIT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 480,000

LOTS ONLY
OLD PROVINCIAL ROAD, SALANGAN, SAN MIGUEL

Lot 51 – LOT 1819-D
Lot Area: 220 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 33,000

Lot 52 – LOT 1819-I
Lot Area: 461 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 69,000

Lot 53 – LOT 1819-E
Lot Area: 505 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 76,000

Lot 54 – LOT 1819-J
Lot Area: 506 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 76,000

Lot 55 – LOT 1819-K
Lot Area: 553 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 83,000

Lot 56 – LOT 1819-L
Lot Area: 600 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 90,000

Lot 57 – LOT 1819-M
Lot Area: 723 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 108,000

Lot 58 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 337 sqm
RUBY ST, ROSARYVILLE SUBD.PHASE 2, STA CRUZ, GUIGINTO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 573,000

Lot 59 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 924 sqm
LOT 9943 (568-D) LEGASPI COMPOUND. STO. CRISTO PULILAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 485,000

Lot 60 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 412 sqm
LOT 1 BLK 3,GONZALES ST., SAN AGUSTIN SAN RAFAEL
Minimum Bid Price: Php 130,000

Lot 61 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1820 sqm
LOT 3206, VILLACORTA ST., SAN ILDEFONSO
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,380,000

Lot 62 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 5000 sqm
NORBERTO ST.(INTERIOR), SAN JOSE SAN MIGUEL
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,250,000

Lot 63 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 3328 sqm
LOT 54-0-2, # 104(008) DE JESUS ST., POBLACION PLARIDEL
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,700,000

Lot 64 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 240 sqm
LOT 11 BLK 6, GUILLERMA VILLAGE STA. RITA SAN MIGUEL
Minimum Bid Price: Php 250,000

Lot 65 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 744 sqm
LOT 183-D, QUEZON ST., CUT-CUT GUIGUINTO. BULACAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 316,000

Lot 66 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 464 sqm
LOT 2130-C-7-G-5-F-3-D, E. VERGEL DE DIOS ST BANGA II PLARIDEL
Minimum Bid Price: Php 555,000

Lot 67 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 201 sqm
LOT 1 BLK 16 DONA RITA AVE COR. GOLDEN SHOWER ROAD, GREEN PLAINS SUBD., SAN MARCOS CALUMPIT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 480,000

Lot 68 – LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 200 sqm
L15 to 18 Blk 6,EMCCO SUBD. PANDAYAN,MEYCAUAYAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 420,000

LOTS ONLY : MCARTHUR HI-WAY BRGY. SALUYSOY, MEYCAUAYAN

Lot 69 – LOT 1 BLK 1
Lot Area: 67 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 246,000

Lot 70 – LOT 2 BLK 1
Lot Area: 67 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 246,000

Lot 71 – LOT 3 BLK 1
Lot Area: 52 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 72 – LOT 4 BLK 1
Lot Area: 52 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 73 – LOT5 BLK 1
Lot Area: 52 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 74 – LOT 6 BLK 1
Lot Area: 52 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 75 – LOT 7 BLK 1
Lot Area: 51 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 192,000

Lot 76 – LOT 8 BLK 1
Lot Area: 51.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 185,000

Lot 77 – LOT 9 BLK 1
Lot Area: 51 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 191,000

Lot 78 – LOT 10 BLK 1
Lot Area: 51sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 191,000

Lot 79 – LOT 11 BLK 1
Lot Area: 50.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 80 – LOT 12 BLK1
Lot Area: 50.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 189,000

Lot 81 – LOT 13 BLK 1
Lot Area: 50 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 187,000

Lot 82 – LOT 14 BLK 1
Lot Area: 50 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 187,000

Lot 83 – LOT 15 BLK 1
Lot Area: 49 50 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 185,000

Lot 84 – LOT 16 BLK 1
Lot Area: 49 50 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 185,000

Lot 85 – LOT 17 BLK
Lot Area: 49 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 183,000

Lot 86 – LOT 18 BLK 1
Lot Area: 49 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 183,000

Lot 87 – LOT 19 BLK 1
Lot Area: 48.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 181,000

Lot 88 – LOT 20 BLK 1
Lot Area: 48.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 181,000

Lot 89 – LOT 21 BLK 1
Lot Area: 48 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 178,000

Lot 90 – LOT 22 BLK 1
Lot Area: 47.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 178,000

Lot 91 – LOT 23 BLK 1
Lot Area: 60 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 224,000

Lot 92 – LOT 24 BLK 1
Lot Area: 59 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 221,000

Lot 93 – LOT 13 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 94 – LOT 14 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 95 – LOT 15 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 96 – LOT 34 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 97 – LOT 16 BLK 2
Lot Area: 77 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 282,000

Lot 98 – LOT 17 BLK 2
Lot Area: 46 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 173,000

Lot 99 – LOT 18 BLK 2
Lot Area: 49sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 180,000

Lot 100 – LOT 19 BLK 2
Lot Area: 51 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 190,000

Lot 101 – LOT 20 BLK 2
Lot Area: 93 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 335,000

Lot 102 – LOT 21 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 103 – LOT 22 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 104 – LOT 23 BLK 2
Lot Area: 55 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 198,000

Lot 105 – LOT 24 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 106 – LOT 25 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 107 – LOT 26 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 108 – LOT 27 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 109 – LOT 28 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 110 – LOT 29 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 111 – LOT 30 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52.5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 112 – LOT 31 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 113 – LOT 32 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 114 – LOT 33 BLK 2
Lot Area: 52 5 sqm
Minimum Bid Price: Php 196,000

Lot 115 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 200 sqm Floor Area:747 sqm
PROV'L. RD. SITIO SAN PEDRO, PUROK 7. AREA P. SAPANG PALAY. SDJM
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,295,000

Lot 116 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 402 sqm Floor Area:302 sqm
BRGY. CANIOGAN, MALOLOS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 720,000

Lot 117 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 384 sqm Floor Area:225 sqm
LOT 10 BLK 11, VELASQUEZ ST CORAZON, CALUMPIT
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,200,000

Lot 118 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 134 sqm
Floor Area:255 sqm
LOT 23-C-1-A-1, MACARTHUR HIWAY, SAN JUAN BALAGTAS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 2,680,000

Lot 119 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 854 sqm Floor Area:240 sqm
LOTS 4896 O, N & P, 53 INT SORIENTE ST TUGATOG MEYCAUAYAN
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,000,000

Lot 120 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 248 sqm
Floor Area: 240 sqm
104 CADENA dE AMOR ST., ALDO HEIGHTS SUBD., BULIHAN, MALOLOS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 1,040,000

Lot 121 – LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 181 sqm
Floor Area:150 sqm
230 NOLASCO ST., PULONG GUBAT, BALAGTAS
Minimum Bid Price: Php 664,000

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OBITUARIES

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The Board of Directors, Management and Staff
of
SHARP (PHILS.) CORPORATION
mourn the death of its Director and Corporate Secretary

ATTY. MARCELO P. VILLANUEVA

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on November 11, 2003

and extend their deepest sympathy to his family.
We request the pious readers to join us in our prayers
for the eternal repose of his soul.

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved

JOSE C. DENOGA, M.D.

UST College of Medicine Class 1939
First Administrator and Vice Chairman,
Philippine Medical Care Commission (1971-1981)
First Chairman, Philippine Board of Anesthesiology (1968-1970)
President, Philippine Medical Association (1965-1966)

He peacefully joined our Creator and his wife, Dr. Julita (†) Uichanco Denoga, on November 11, 2003 at the age of 88.

His FAMILY: CHILDREN and In-laws - **LITA & Dan Payawal, Dr. TESSIE & Dr. Hunfry (†) Estacio, Dr. BEE & Engr. Steve Andaya, CHITO & Jocie Denoga, Engr. BUTCH & Marie-lou Denoga, ANDY & Rio Denoga;**
GRANDCHILDREN - **Tintin, Andre, & Cai Ibarra, Joel Payawal; Liza, Yvee, Oni, & Victor Estacio; Marco, Carlo, & Susanna Andaya; Joseph, & Julie Denoga; Camille, Marivic, Michael, & Jasmin Denoga; Trish Denoga;**
SISTERS - **Eufrocina, and Mariquita Denoga**
Request the pious readers, friends, and relatives to pray for the eternal rest of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Chapel of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, November 16, 2003 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

"Only goodness and love will pursue me all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come." *(Psalm 23:6)*

In Loving Memory
on the
THIRTIETH DEATH ANNIVERSARY
of

NESTOR B. TESORO

November 23, 1907 – November 15, 1973

Holy Mass was offered on November 14, 2003 at:

St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna, Austria	8:00 A.M.

and at the following churches today, November 15, 2003:

Immaculate Conception Parish Church, Cubao, Q.C.	6:00 A.M.
Sto. Rosario Parish Church, Makinabang, Baliwag, Bulacan	6:30 A.M.
Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish, Ermita, Manila	8:00 A.M.
Tesoro's Mausoleum, Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City	8:30 A.M.
Santuario de San Antonio Parish, Forbes Park, Makati City	6:00 P.M.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

VICTORIO "TOYONG" OCHOA

Died in the grace of our Lord
on November 13, 2003 at the age of 93.

His loving children:
Serafin & Amelia, Juling & Levy,
Adeling & Edwin, Romy & Carol,
Fred & Amy, and **Tessie & Rod**

together with his grandchildren, brother, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Rizal Funeral Homes, La Bien Chapel, 438 Cementina St., Pasay City.

Interment will be announced later

MESSAGE OF THANKS
We, the family of the late

LEONARDO V. AGUILAR

of Caingin, San Rafael, Bulacan
who passed away on November 7, 2003
wish to express our sincere gratitude to all those who comforted us with their presence, sent flowers and spiritual offerings, kept vigil with us, attended the funeral rites and in immeasurable ways were there for us when we needed it most.

Message of Thanks
We, the family of the late

AGAPITO "ITO" C. CORDOVA

(former Chief Customs Operations Officer – Bonds Division
March 16, 1931 - November 3, 2003
who peacefully joined our Lord at the age of 72.
wish to convey our sincerest gratitude and appreciation to all who sent mass cards and messages of sympathy, flowers, donations, kept vigil, called from abroad, attended masses and funeral rites, helped and comforted us in so many ways during our time of bereavement.

Ah, Sunflower, weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime,
Where the traveller's journey is done.

We, the family of

Lourdes Jimenez Carvajal

who now stands in the presence of the Lord delighting in his glory for all eternity wish to thank all those who stayed with us to the end; kept vigil with their prayers, believe in her indelible contribution to the entertainment industry as Inday Badiday, and rejoice in her exemplary goodness and generosity.

For the flowers which she so loved, the songs that you sang in joy through the tears, for remembering her laughter, for a word, a gesture that brought us such comfort, for loving her the way we do, thank you.

Through her intercession, we pray the Lord will shower you with the blessings after your own heart.

"Come to Me, all you are weary and burdened, and
I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

The AFPOVAI Board of Directors condoles with the family of

COL. RODOLFO B. VILLANUEVA (RET.)

Now peacefully rests in the infinite Grace and Goodness of the Lord on the 13th of November 2003 at the age of 71.

His beloved wife, **Puring** and children, **Romulo, Ulysses, Dante, Rodolfo, Jr.** and **Belinda**; brothers, sisters, in-laws, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment is tentatively scheduled on 19 November 2003 at the Heritage Memorial Park, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Atty. RODOLFO ARCEO QUINIO

of Batangas and Makati City

Peacefully joined his Creator
on November 13, 2003 at the age of 86.

His bereaved wife **Cleotilde**; children **Rod & Celine, Lito & Diana**; grandchildren **Ina & Johan, Rizza & JV, Irene, Ria, David, Niño** and **Rachel**; great grandson **Gelo**; sister **Belen**; other relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Agoncillo Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park), Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, November 18, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Our Beloved Mama

CUA CHIU HA SY

Peacefully joined her Creator on November 12, 2003
at the age of 70.

Her beloved husband **Cua Hong "Jimmy Young (†)"**, children **Doris & Willie Lee, Mary & Philip Yao, Julie & Willy Lam, Susan & Woody Sze, Joseph & Armida Santos, Ruby & Robin Kaw, Karina & Danny Yu, Nelson & Rachel Ricafort, Jonathan & Irene Lim**, and grandchildren request you to join us in prayer.

Her remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Chapel A, North Wing, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

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Graduate of Business course preferred; minimum of 1 year supervisory experience from customer/service industry; team-oriented, with above average communication and leadership skills

FAST FOOD MANAGERS

Graduate of business course preferred; minimum of 1 year supervisory experience from food chain industry; team-oriented, with above average communication and leadership skills

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Female, Mass Communications graduate; preferably with experience in same capacity or in public relations; personable, articulate and outgoing; ability to profitably relate with customers

MARKETING OFFICERS/ASSISTANTS

Marketing major graduate or any related discipline with relevant work experience; articulate, personable and outgoing; ability to interact effectively with people at all levels

PHARMACISTS & PHARMACY CLERKS

Female, not more than 25 years old; BS Pharmacy graduate; license holder for Pharmacist; alert, with proficiency in oral communication

COOKS/BAKERS

Not more than 38 years old; minimum of 2 years work experience in same capacity from medium to large scale restaurant/bakeshop

PLAIN CLOTHES PERSONNEL

Male, not more than 24 years old, Criminology graduate; responsible, keen and alert; ability to work in shifting schedule

SUPPORT/ADMINISTRATION

BUILDING ADMINISTRATION MANAGERS

Male, licensed Mechanical or Electrical Engineer; minimum of 3 years work experience in building administration and property management; highly organized, results-oriented, with excellent leadership skills

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGERS

Female, graduate of Psychology or Business; minimum of 3 years supervisory experience; solid background in all aspects of HR functions; proficiency in the Labor Code of the Phils.; excellent organization, communication and interpersonal skills

SUPPORT/ADMINISTRATION

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Male, licensed Mechanical Engineer; minimum of 3 years work experience in managerial or supervisory capacity; substantial exposure in preventive & corrective maintenance of mechanical equipment from medium to large scale industry; strong leadership, organization and planning skills

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

Male, licensed Electrical Engineer; minimum of 3 years work experience in managerial or supervisory capacity; well-versed in industrial wiring and motor control; strong leadership, organization and planning skills

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATORS

Male, BS Computer Science graduate; minimum of 3 years relevant work experience; solid background in systems programming using AS400, Novell, UNIX, etc.

CADD OPERATORS

BS Architecture graduate; technical knowledge and hands-on experience in planning and designing of interior lay-out for commercial projects; proficiency in AUTOCADD

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Female, BS/AB Psychology graduate or any related discipline; preferably with 2 years exposure in all aspects of HR functions including but not limited to Recruitment, Training, & Employee Relations; pleasant disposition, with excellent planning, communication and interpersonal skills

NURSES

Female, registered nurse; minimum of 1 year hospital exposure; mature, responsible, with ability to work in shifting schedule and with minimal supervision

VISUAL ARTISTS

Fine Arts graduate major in Interior Design; minimum of 1 year work experience in same capacity; proficiency in Corel Draw, Adobe Photoshop/Illustrator and other graphic software applications

COMPUTER TECHNICIANS

Male, Computer Science/Engineering graduate; minimum of 2 years work experience in maintenance & troubleshooting of PCs; systematic and results-oriented

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Graduate of Mechanical Engineering or related vocational course; technical knowledge and hands-on experience in operating diesel engines with more than 1000hp

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EXPORTBANK Plaza Condominium Corporation Chairman Sergio R. Ortiz Luis Jr. (left) receiving the Certificate of Registration from the Director General of Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) Lilia B. De Lima (center). Witnessing the presentation is ExportBank Plaza Condominium Corporation Treasurer Benjamin P. Castillo (right).

NFA releases fund for cooperative development

FURTHER intensifying its pro-farmer policy, the National Food Authority has released to various cooperatives nationwide a total of P20.3 million from their accumulated cooperative development incentive fund (CDIF) deposited with the agency.

The amount represents total releases from January to August this year.

Equivalent to P.25 per kg of palay, the CDIF is an incentive the NFA is giving to the farmer organizations selling their produce to the agency. The fund is intended for the purchase of post harvest facilities and for the implementation of other cooperative building projects and programs including entrepreneurial training and skills building for their members.

NFA Administrator Arthur C. Yap said that with the cooperatives' purchase of post harvest facilities, the NFA effectively contributes to the development of farmers organizations while boosting its quality rice program.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
Occupational Safety and Health Center
North Avenue cor. Agham Rd.,
Diliman Quezon City 929-6036 to 39

OSHC

NOTICE OF VACANT POSITIONS

(2) Medical Technologist I

SG 11 (P10,535.00); RA1080, BS Med. Tech./BS Public Health, training and experience not required.

(1) Radiologic Technologist II

SG-10 (P9,939.00); RA 1080; Bachelors Degree in Radiologic Tech.; training and experience not required.

Note:
- *incomplete requirements will not be processed*
- *no need to apply in person*

Requirements:
- *Comprehensive Resumé with 2x2 picture*
- *CSC Eligibility / Board Rating*
- *Transcript of Records - (cert. true copy)*
- *Diploma - (cert. true copy)*
- *Certificate of Trainings Attended*
- *Certificate of Employment (if applicable)*

Send Resumé to: The Office of the Executive Director, Occupational Safety and Health Center, North Ave. cor. Science Road, Diliman, Quezon City or through e-mail: oshcenter@oshc.dole.gov.ph. Deadline for submission is on 21 November 2003.

X REVOLUTIONS

The gathering

THE ALUMNI Association of Xavier School will hold its annual Grand Homecoming on Nov. 29, Saturday, 7pm, at the Xavier High School Gym. The event is presented by SUN CELLULAR, FORD BALINTAWAK, PEPSI, LONE STAR LIGHT, AQUA GUARD ELASTOMERIC WATERPROOFING PAINT, STAR CRUISE, and by XAVIER BATCH 1978, the Silver Jubilarians, in cooperation with Batches 63, 68, 73,83, 88, 93, 98, and 2003.

The night's program include a sumptuous dinner followed by an entertaining show hosted by MS. CINDY KURLETO, with top comedian MR. JON SANTOS and the HYPERBEAT band. Lots of old memories and camaraderie are in store for the Alumni. There will also be a grand finale raffle of two FORD vehicles.

For tickets and other inquiries, please call the Xavier Alumni Office at telephone nos. 727-3329 and 726-4855 and ask for Imee or Sally.

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Application closes strictly on 18 Nov. 2003.

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of **PHILSLIFE SERVICES, INC.** with office address at **5th floor Ramon Magsaysay Center, Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila** for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as **New Developer/Operator of Social Service – Retirement Village** with plant site at **Barangay Pulong Bunga, Silang, Cavite** has been officially accepted on **November 07, 2003** and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 7th day of November 2003.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO C. CHAVEZ
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

NOTICE OF MERGER

Notice is hereby given that the Articles of Merger and Plan of Merger of **AAPI REALTY CORPORATION** and **SUNUNISAL REALTY, INC.**, with **AAPI REALTY CORPORATION** as the surviving corporation, have been approved in meetings duly called for the purpose, by majority vote of the respective Board of Directors and by stockholders owning at least two-thirds (2/3) of the outstanding capital stock of the said corporations. The said Articles of Merger and Plan of Merger were filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on November 12, 2003.

This announcement shall serve as notice to all interested parties of the legal effects of the aforesaid merger.

November 12, 2003.
Makati City, Metro Manila

JUDY ANNE ABAT-VERA
Corporate Secretary
AAPI Realty Corporation

ALELI MILITSALA-BONIOL
Corporate Secretary
Sununisal Realty, Inc.

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Utility Personnel: High School graduate

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Please bring your bio-data with picture, NBI & Police clearance.

Interview schedule: November 18-19, 2003 (9:00 AM - 4 PM)

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UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

A. The University of the Philippines Diliman hereby invites all interested parties to pre-qualify for its bidding for:

1 lot COMPUTER SYSTEMS, etc.

B. The following eligibility requirements in two copies, duly certified must be submitted to the Supply and Property Management Office (SPMO) at Instructional Materials Corp. Building (National Book Devt. Board), A. Regidor Street fronting the PAG-ASA Astronomical Observatory, U.P. Campus, Diliman, Quezon City, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:

1. SEC/DTI/Cooperative Development Registration Papers
2. 2003 Business License/Permit
3. Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2001 & 2002) marked "received" by the BIR with the accompanying Audited Financial Statements
4. Company Profile
5. List of clients and references, and supporting documents
6. List of company equipment and other assets
7. Duly notarized statement of the duly authorized representative of the company that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agencies, offices or corporations

DETAILED SPECIFICATIONS WILL BE LISTED IN THE BIDDING DOCUMENTS.

The above-mentioned requirements must be completely submitted *in two (2) separate folders with Table of Contents and properly tabbed*. Otherwise, the same will not be accepted by the SPMO.

C. Deadline for submission of pre-qualification documents: November 21, 2003.

D. Pre-bidding and bidding schedules shall be announced to all eligible bidders.

E. The University of the Philippines reserves the right to review the qualifications of a selected bidder, subject to technical, financial and production criteria, reject any or all bids, waive any formality or defect therein and accept the offer considered most advantageous to the University.

F. For further particulars, please inquire from Mr. Pedro E. Fajardo, Chief, SPMO, anytime during office hours at the above-mentioned address or call tel. no. 920-53-74 (direct) and 920-53-01 local 4331, 4230 and 4911.

(Sgd.) EMERLINDA R. ROMAN
Chancellor

(PDI – November 8 & 15, 2003)

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang
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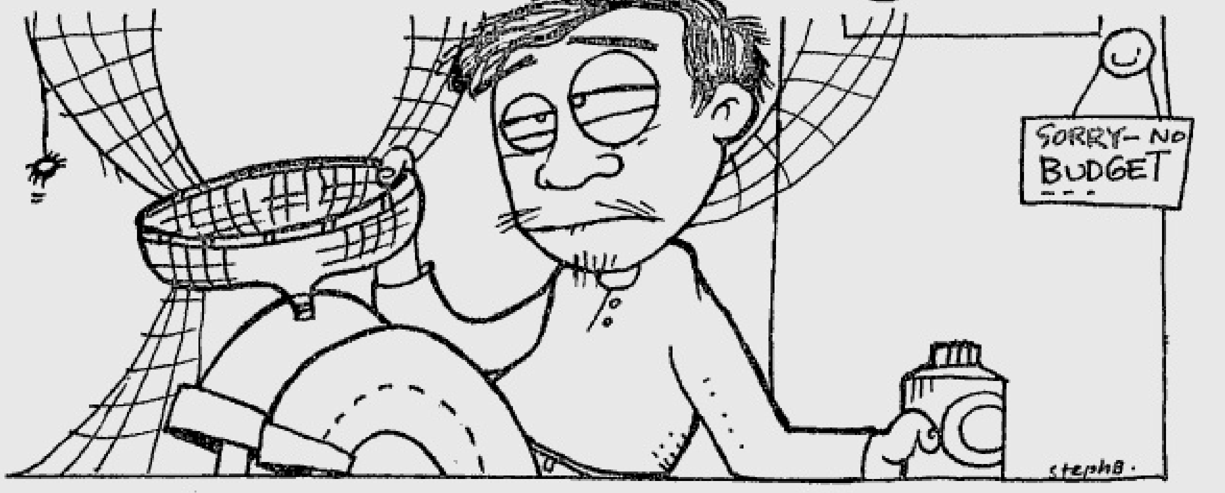
Filipino inventors lack gov't support

By Tessa R. Salazar



HAVE you ever removed facial warts and moles using a topical ointment whose main ingredient is the cashew nut? Have you heard about the pressure fluid machine? Have you ever fired a multiple projectile bullet? Have you seen a bed-ridden patient moving around on a Prince Portable Lifter? Have you used a natural insect growth regulator in your backyard?

Three years ago, these Filipino inventions bagged gold, silver and bronze medals at an international inventors' competition in Kuala Lumpur.

A year before that, seven Filipino inventors bagged top honors at an international exhibition in Geneva.

Last year, a biology graduate student won the Young Inventors Gold Award for developing a simple, cheap way to test water for harmful toxins. Edward Quinto had bested 220 entries from universities in Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

After more than 20 years of research, testing and development, the Alco diesel formulated by Rudy Lantano is now in full commercial production. This alternative fuel has the potential to save three million barrels of regular diesel annually.

Problems, problems

Despite their creativeness and resourcefulness, however, Filipino inventors can't seem to find a niche in Philippine society. Too many problems hound them, including in-fighting among inventors' organizations, lack of protection from multinational companies, lack of funds, inaccessibility of tax incentives to backyard inventors, and lack of support from the government.

According to a Department of Justice ruling, inventors' groups must be under one umbrella organization and that government should recognize all groups belonging to this organization.

But inventors interviewed by the INQUIRER say the Department of Science and Technology recognizes only one group: the Filipino Inventors Society Inc. (FIS).

Gonzalo O. Catan Jr., Filipino Inventors Federation president, says that by recognizing only one group, the DOST is giving the FIS undue advantage over other groups.

No break from taxes

Catan also says that small inventors in the Visayas and Mindanao could not access grants and tax incentives given by the government.

Francisco O. Pagayon, president of FIS, says the tax holidays provided by law could only be availed of by large-scale inventors.

Only those who own a legitimate company or factory, can present company and invention profiles, and can show existing product lines in the market could avail themselves of tax breaks, he says.

"As a result, only 40 well-to-do inventors had tax holidays," Pagayon says. "We want to have tax breaks for small-time inventors, too."

Fund for inventors

Republic Act 7459, or the Invention Guaranty Fund, mandates the government to provide P10 million a year to accelerate the development and commercialization of local inventions.

The fund can be loaned at minimal interest rates to patented Filipino inventions. The money can be used for the purchase of machinery and equipment and for working capital.

An inventor's work needs to be approved by a screening committee of seven government agencies, including DOST, National Economic Development Authority, Bureau of Internal Revenue, Department of Trade and Industry and the head of the FIS, before it could get funding.

But since 1999, the government has not been releasing the funds, says Tomas Briñas of the DOST's Technology Application and Promotions Institute (Tapi).

The excuse for this, he says, was the budget deficit. And since the promotion of local inventions was not a priority program, the fund has since been withheld.

Too many organizations

There are too many inventors' organizations in the country (about 24), and some of them are feuding.

"They have different voices. They are disputing. If you are an investor, would you invest in people who couldn't stop fighting (among themselves)?" comments Briñas.

He says there is a need for inventors to "have one voice," and a stronger say in the government's priorities.

There are in fact two organizations called Filipino Inventors' Society—one of which is headed by Pagayon. It has 3,000 members but only 75 are active and most live in Metro Manila.

Pagayon admits that the presence of two FIS groups is one reason inventors are not being taken seriously by the government.

But he says the dispute was "internal" and was up to the courts to decide. And the sooner the issue is settled, the better, Pagayon says.

As of press time, Johnson Fong, the president of the other FIS, could not be reached for comment.

Not marketing savvy

Many inventors, Pagayon says, find it hard to penetrate the market because many do not know how to prototype, market and finance their inventions.

Pagayon developed the Probaton (Police Reconnaissance Operation Baton, an L-type truncheon with a rotating handle) now used by the Philippine National Police, the Metro Manila Development Authority and barangay tanods.

Pagayon says the government had given funding for the construction of a P27-million building for inventors, but only its skeletal structures and posts have so far been built.

According to the DOST Tapi, the building was intended for inventors' exhibits, business spaces and workshops for prototyping models.

Further construction of the building had been suspended due to budget constraints.

David vs. Goliath

Filipino inventors say they also lack protection against multinational corporations.

Gonzalo Catan, Mapecon vice president who invented the green charcoal stove to replace what he says were "cancer causing" LPG stoves, recounts how he had to go through two decades of court proceedings to fend off attempts by multinational pest control companies and the Philippine Fertilizer Pesticide Authority to disprove his inventions.

Catan claims the MNCs felt "threatened" by his company's products. "They worked hard so that I would not be able to sell my inventions in my own country," he says.

Mapecon has 38 patents in its portfolio. Nine more patents are pending, most of these related to pest control and other environmental products, including the green charcoal stove.

Pagayon says his Probaton was also under constant threat from a big company which manufactured truncheons.

2 inventors: 1 succeeds, the other still looking for big break

BENJAMIN Samson's fuel additive cuts gasoline consumption by 40 percent.

Text and photo by Charles E. Buban

THIS is the story of two inventors: one managed to hit big time abroad, the other is still looking for recognition in his motherland.

Juanito Simon, a former vice president of the Filipino Inventors Society, is a US-educated and -trained mechanical engineer who formulated the Tribotech brand of motor lubricant products. Locally known as Per'tua, the products can enhance performance of engines, transmissions, fuel and cooling systems.

Some of his products are now being used by a number of companies in the United States, including the McDonnell Douglas for its AH-65 Apache combat support helicopters, and Boeing autoclaves and giant ovens which bake vital aircraft parts.

Patented worldwide

Simon managed to have his Tribotech/Per'tua products patented in the Philippines, US, Australia, South Africa and several other countries in Asia and Europe.

After being tested extensively in the States, his Tribotech Intermetallic Junction Preventative product is now used in many US farms, aerospace companies, industrial operations and even in some fire trucks and police cars.

Fuel additive

Then there's Benjamin Samson, 67, a chemical engineering graduate of Mapua.

He has several inventions to his name, the latest being the Samson Gasoline/Diesel Saver and Power Improver. It's a fuel additive that cuts gasoline or diesel consumption by as much as 40 percent, reduces production of exhaust smoke and is claimed to improve engine power and performance.

A 120 ml product (which costs P50) is mixed to about 20 liters of fuel to achieve these benefits, according to Samson.

Drivers of the Pangkalahatang Samahan ng Manila Suburbs Drivers Association (Pasang Masda) used Samson's product when they participated in last year's fuel economy run sponsored by the Department of Energy. They placed first in the 7-seater jeepney category and second in the 9-seater jeepney category.

Long wait?

But Samson is not as fortunate as Simon.

He is still awaiting approval of his patent by the Intellectual Property Office of the Philippines and a formal recognition by the Department of Science and Technology.

"How can I prove my invention works? I've been to the DOST's Technology Application and Promotion Institute several times already and every time I get the same response: no budget and the necessary equipment to test my invention," Samson laments.

Despite his disappointment with the bureaucracy, Samson continued with his work and transformed his home in San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City into his sales headquarters and laboratory.

"I was able to ask some diesel and gasoline dealers to carry my products, but most of the time I personally visit jeepney and drivers associations to promote my invention," Samson says.

He believes his product will contribute a lot to the government's campaign to clean the air of pollution.

Looking elsewhere

While awaiting the commercial success of his product in the Philippines, Samson says he has started looking for foreign markets.

He is scheduled to go in January to Thailand where a firm invited him to test his product for possible commercial distribution.

The Thai firm is familiar with Samson's talents. He had previously helped their people and introduced to them the use of a mango flower inducer he had invented several decades ago. The mango flower inducer won in a National Institute of Science and Technology contest in the '70s.

Samson says he only plans to market his fuel additive in Thailand, not sell the patent there.

"Our problem here is that we have little faith in ourselves. But since I still love this country, I will continue to convince more Filipinos of what inventors are capable of doing to help bring this country to prosperity," he says.

Clay-mation

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

MY FAVORITE creation myth is the one where God takes a lump of clay, molds it into the shape of a man, and bakes it in the oven. Unfortunately, he pulls it out too early, which is why there are fair-skinned people in the world. Then God takes a second lump of clay, molds it, and bakes it. This time he leaves the clay in the oven too long and pulls out a burnt figure, which explains the presence of dark-skinned people. The third time God shapes and bakes a lump of clay, he pulls it out at the right time, producing the race of people with golden-brown skin just like ours. Now you know why I like this story at lot.

I found myself thinking about this myth when the Oct. 24 issue of Science magazine published the paper "Experimental Models of Primitive Cellular Compartments: Encapsulation, Growth and Division."

Authored by Martin Hanczyc and Shelly Fujikawa, both members of Jack Szostak's lab at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, the paper discusses how clay might have helped cells form at the very beginning of all life.

Protolife

Scientists define protolife by saying either (a) that for a thing to be considered alive it must first have cells or (b) that a thing is alive if it has the ability to make more of itself.

The latter idea was what inspired Hanczyc et al. to start playing with clay.

Previous studies found that certain clays help speed up chemical reactions involving RNA formation. The variety of clays used suggests that it's not the clay per se that matter but rather the physical properties of the substance.

DNA. RNA

A quick biology review: think of deoxynucleic acid (DNA) as the brains of the operation that never leaves the cell nucleus. It's a double helix made up of nucleic acids that encode the information needed for an organism to live. Think of ribonucleic acid (RNA) as the arms, legs, eyes and ears of the operation. It's a single strand of nucleic acids that delivers the information hidden in the DNA to other places in the cell so that new proteins can be made. Without DNA and RNA, the organism can't move and reproduce and so on. But without RNA, you can't have an organism.

Bonding with RNA

Taking their cues from the aforementioned studies, Hanczyc et al. went off on a tangent and found that negatively charged montmorillonite clay has the ability to form a bond with RNA.

The clay-RNA clump then catches the attention of either vesicles (little sacs that are more often usually discussed in cell biology) that have cell-like structures in them, which absorbs them or fatty acid micelles (think protovesicles composed of several hair-like strands, one end positively charged and the other negatively charged, forming a bubble) then reacts to the charged environment, taking that first step toward evolving into living cells.

Without the clay acting as a catalyst, one can't tell how long it would have taken the vesicles and the RNA to even get together.

Clue to life

Because growth and the ability to replicate are usually descriptions of something alive, Dr. Szostak makes it very clear that his lab isn't saying that clay is the source of all life, or any life for that matter.

Instead, he says, "we are saying that we have demonstrated growth and division without any biochemical machinery. Ultimately, if we can demonstrate more natural ways this might have happened, it may begin to give us clues about how life could have actually gotten started on primitive Earth."

In other words, neither the clay nor the minerals in it are alive, or give life to anything; the minerals in the clay just act as catalysts, speeding up the chemical process by which RNA and cell-like structures meet up.

Biology is the study of life, and within the context of Hanczyc et al.'s research, life doesn't exist—yet. The question now is, when did living things really come into being, and how did that happen?

Perhaps someday Dr. Szostak and other researchers will be able to answer that for us.

Correction

On a side note, thanks to Carlitos Algarme for spotting an error in my physics equations. In last week's column, I said that to calculate the amps in a light bulb, you should divide the voltage by the watts. As power (P) measured in watts is calculated by multiplying voltage (V) by currents (I) as measured in amps, or $P=VI$, rearranging the variables results in $I=P/V$, which means that you should have divided the watts by the volts.

EYE SPECIALIST
UERM Medical Center president Dr. Romeo Divinagracia confers the title professor emeritus in ophthalmology to Dr. Ramon T. Batungbacal during awarding ceremonies in Makati. Assisting him is Dr. Fernando Sanchez, UERMMC vice president.

Diabetes center opens

ST. LUKE'S Medical Center recently opened its Endocrine, Metabolic and Diabetes Center, a world-class, state-of-the-art facility staffed by medical professionals committed to delivering quality service.

The Center provides outpatient endocrine diagnostic evaluation and testing for patients with endocrine (pituitary, thyroid, adrenal, gonadal, lipid, mineral), diabetes and metabolic problems.

It also has a diabetes nurse educator who can instruct patients on diet and exercise, insulin administration, use of a glucose meter and the complications of diabetes. The Center will also provide comprehensive diabetic foot and wound care.

The Center is open Mondays to Fridays, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Signs of heart disease missed in children

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

HELP!
StephB.

MEDICAL FILES

ORLANDO, Florida—If you still think it's cute for your children to be plump and chubby, think again.

About one in eight schoolchildren already have three or more risk factors of metabolic syndrome, a 21st century malady that has alarmingly increased the incidence of heart attacks and strokes.

The syndrome is a precursor of cardiovascular disease, and researchers reported during the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2003 here that it appears to be already present even in our elementary school children. That's not elementary knowledge even for heart specialists, and it surprised not a few of the 25,000 heart doctors who attended the convention.

"The risk was about 1.6 times higher for girls than boys," said the study's lead author Joanne S. Harrell, Ph.D., professor of nursing and director of the Center for Research on Chronic Illness at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing.

She said the children included in the study were regular, normal kids, but already had significant risk factors that waved red flags for the future.

"If nothing is done, a good number of these children could develop type 2 diabetes and heart disease," Harrell said, as she raised great concern on the preliminary results of their four-year study.

Clustering of risk factors

Metabolic syndrome is still frequently unrecognized as an ominous disease entity. Thus, patients don't get the aggressive treatment they need.

It's a clustering of cardiovascular disease risk factors, including high blood pressure, elevated triglycerides, low levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL or "good" cholesterol) glucose intolerance, elevated insulin levels and excess body weight. The syndrome puts a person at early risk for diabetes and coronary heart disease.

The investigators examined 3,203 students between 8 and 17 who lived in rural areas.

"We chose to study children in rural schools with a high minority population because rural children have slightly higher rates of obesity than urban children, and type 2 diabetes is more common among minorities," Harrell said.

Each child was evaluated for body mass index, blood pressure, two types of lipids (fats) in the blood, and two indicators of how well the body processes glucose.

The students are supposed to receive follow-ups for three to four years, and Harrell's report before the heart specialists was based on their initial evaluation.

Half of kids with risk factor

Initial screening showed that more than half of the children (58 percent) had at least one of the six metabolic syndrome risk factors, 27 percent had two or more, and 14 percent had three or more risk factors.

Some children between 8 and 9 already had three or more risk factors. Among older teenagers, aged 14-17, 11 percent had three or more risk factors.

The highest rates of multiple risk factors (16 percent) were among children around the onset of puberty, aged 10-13.

Prevalence of obesity

More than one in four of the participants were classified as overweight, with a body mass index at or above the 95th percentile for someone of their age, gender and height.

Previously, researchers had documented a very high prevalence of obesity, one factor in metabolic syndrome, among teenagers.

This study looks at the development and clustering of six metabolic syndrome risk factors beginning prior to puberty and continuing through the teen years.

Significantly more girls (16 percent) than boys (11 percent) had three or more metabolic syndrome risk factors, which the researchers attribute to higher levels of overweight in the girls.

Screening children

The long-term monitoring of these schoolchildren and subsequent follow-up tests may eventually help physicians determine who needs to be screened for various metabolic syndrome risk factors, and at what age.

Meanwhile, the data already reinforce the need for primary prevention of heart disease in youth, Harrell said.

"I want to alert people to the potential dangers and motivate them to help our youth increase physical activity and avoid obesity," she said.

It is well-established that greater physical activity can modify and help improve most metabolic syndrome features. Reducing weight to ideal levels in children also helps avoid other metabolic syndrome risk factors.

It might be a little too late to get concerned with our health as we approach middle age. We have to start healthy lifestyle changes in our children, which is the best time to prevent the atherosclerotic process from taking a deadly toll in later years.

We should discard the unfortunate and potentially disastrous misconception that children can eat all the fatty foods they want without having to worry of its future consequences. Nothing can be farther from the truth.

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Enterprising teachers: not just in the Philippines

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

IT IS NO secret that a majority of our schools lack teachers, classrooms and supplies. I have met public school teachers who have paid for their students' paper, pen and books out of their own pockets, and principals who have sacrificed much to ensure the survival of their schools.

Ironically, the richest country in the world faces the same problems. Although the stereotypical middle-class American throws away old stuff liberally, these days a number of US teachers have to scrimp, save and sacrifice just to have adequate classroom supplies.

Ensuring that students have supplies is not the responsibility of teachers, but with dwindling budgets, genuinely concerned mentors have no choice.

My colleague Dr. Cathy Vistro-Yu alerted me to an Aug. 23 report of the Washington Post. I am quoting real-life cases from Nancy Trejos' article "Cuts Force Teachers to Forage for Supplies."

Perhaps our teachers can learn from them, although I have an inkling that many Filipino educators have already been employing such tactics.

Freebies

- Get free supplies from conventions.

"[Special-education teacher] Myrna Thurnher went to a convention in New Orleans and shamelessly grabbed not a couple, but 50, of the red pens given as freebies. She walked around the room after one session to collect leftover notepads. Her loot has found its way to Woodbridge Senior High School in Prince William County. Whether she is traveling to a conference or on vacation, she said, she never leaves a hotel without at least a pen for her students. Her motto: 'Anything free makes its way back to my classroom.'"

Filipino teachers have realized that attending conventions does not only benefit them intellectually, but economically as well. Most conferences give out bags, ballpens and stationery, and math and science conventions usually hand out calculators as well.

- Ask help from local businesses.

"Bonnie Klakowicz, an art teacher at Leesylvania Elementary School persuaded a local grocery store to sell her styrofoam meat trays for 50 cents for an art project."

Some publishing houses automatically grant discounts for bulk textbook sales, but I hope more businesses manufacturing or selling school supplies start giving discounts to educators.

Back-to-school sales

- Take advantage of sales.

"Bernadette Sharp Melvin, a reading teacher who has taught at Carmody Hills Elementary School in Prince George's for 29 years, spent her summer searching newspapers for ads for back-to-school sales. She also went to thrift stores and discount chains. The items in her classroom that she paid for included the Care Bears bulletin board border, the magnetic letters she uses to teach reading and the rug that came from a thrift store.

[Another teacher, first-timer] Nathaniel Thomas, of Forestville Military Academy, has become an astute shopper. Once he found out that he was going to teach US government, he went to a party store and took advantage of a 70-percent discount on Fourth of July decorations."

I take advantage of book sales myself, especially when powerhouses like National Book Store hold a sale in August, and the Bookfair follows in September. In fact, I buy practically nothing unless it is on sale.

Creativity

- Harness students' creativity.

"Bryan Turner, an art teacher at Charles H. Flowers High School, ran out of the 17-by-24-inch paper he needed for a project in which his students drew cityscapes and landscapes. 'I was using Xerox paper, and that's pretty sad.' So he came up with another project for his students: they used the smaller sheets of paper to create their own books."

In terms of creativity, our students and teachers rank among the best in the world. For instance, my friend Mrs. Sally Calabucal, a Metrobank Outstanding Teacher awardee, recycles empty bottles and cans for her visually impaired students to use in their band.

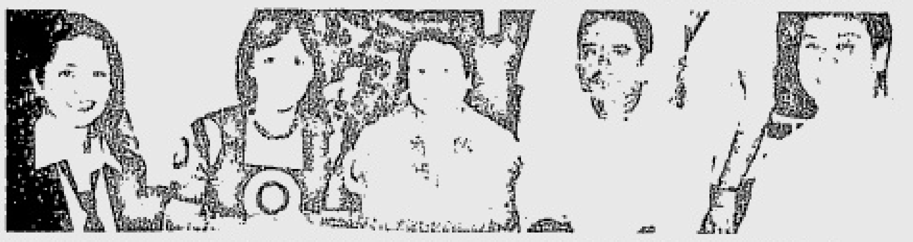
- Tie up with parents' associations.

"The Parent-Teacher Organization at Mill Run Elementary gives teachers $50 each to spend on supplies, and teachers can make proposals for additional money. The PTA at Horizon Elementary School, also in Loudoun County, gives each teacher a $150 stipend to pay for supplies. On top of that, the PTA maintains its own supply cabinet at the school. If a teacher requests an item not in stock, a volunteer will go shopping for it—usually within 48 hours. 'We want to support the teachers as best we can. We don't really want them spending out of their own pocket for these things, nor do we want them to take the time to run out and buy them.'"

Of course there is a divide between parents' groups in public schools and exclusive private academies. In the former, most parents can barely afford to send their children to school, much less support teachers. In the latter, parent-teacher groups tend to be supportive of teaching efforts, although I still have to come across a local PTA that directly helps in classroom supplies.

For US teachers, the good news is that their government has already taken measures to improve their situation. President Bush signed into law a $250-federal-tax credit for teachers who dip into their own pockets for classroom materials. Several lawmakers and teachers' unions have started lobbying for a larger tax credit to cover other expenses such as professional conferences.

At this point, we Filipino teachers can only dream of such largesse. In the meantime we continue guiding the youth as best we can, giving much from our minds, hearts and pockets.



THE VSMMC-MRC partnership was formally launched with the signing of the MOA led by, from left, MRC services manager Catherine Dallarte, MSD corporate affairs director Christine Liwanag, VSMMC chief of hospital Dr. Filomena de los Santos and chief training officer Dr. Joseph Al Alesna, and MSD regional sales manager Alfred Koa, cardiovascular business unit.

MSD Resource Center in Cebu City

PHARMACEUTICAL company Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) recently signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with the Vicente Sotto Memorial Medical Center (VSMMC), a general tertiary medical center and training medical facility in Cebu City, for hosting an MSD Resource Center at the hospital.

The tie-up is in line with MSD's mission of improving healthcare nationwide by providing information and computer services to help the busy physicians access the latest medical information and literature search in diagnosis and treatment of patient conditions.

The MSD Resource Center that will be located at VSMMC will have full resource center facilities.

Among the resources that will be made available are full-text medical journals, browsing services, information tracking and retrieval services, computers, free Internet access, learning programs that deal with improving computer skills as well as medical research materials and facilities which will help address the professional and personal needs of its users and beneficiaries, patient care programs, multimedia services and conference facilities.

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gsk GlaxoSmithKline

Foreign investors warned against political risks in RP

BARCLAYS Capital has warned investors against lingering political risks in the Philippines aggravated by speculations that the government would miss its full-year deficit target due to pre-election spending.

"For the first time since March 2003, we are adopting an underweight position for Philippine credits. We believe Philippine sovereign credits are vulnerable to increased negative risk going forward, much of it politically driven," said Barclays in its November research update.

HSBC, in its review for the month, also noted that Philippine bonds and local currency were being adversely affected due to negative reports, particularly those that dimmed the President Macapagal-Arroyo's chance of winning in the 2004 elections.

"Although the President's decision to seek re-election has eased anxiety, the market remained unconvinced about her ability to win the May presidential election," said HSBC in its monthly regional publication called The View.

The investment banks pointed to the administration's corruption-stained image in view of controversies involving her husband, persistent rumors of a military uprising, the unresolved peace and order in the South, and the strong contenders, including actor Fernando Poe Jr., as the factors that affect the chances of the President to win.

Sovereign bond prices have widened since the July 27 mutiny while the peso remained the poorest performer in the region since the start of the year.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the spreads on the 10-year global bond, for instance, had widened to more than four percentage points following the impeachment case against Davide.

A month ago when the government sold 10-year bonds, the spread was only at 3.8 points over benchmark US Treasuries. The recent $250-million, three-year bond issue carried a spread of 3.77 points.

"After a stabilization of government finances during the first eight months of the year on improved revenue collections and increased spending discipline, signs of fiscal lippage are appearing as budgetary windfalls are being used for pre-presidential election fiscal pump-priming," noted Barclays.

Bathroom fixtures maker eyes big jump in exports

By Michelle V. Remo

HOCHENG Philippines Corp., manufacturer and distributor of HCG brand of bathroom fixtures, has generated P300 million in export sales in the first 10 months of the year, making it the country's No. 1 exporter of these products.

The figure was 20 percent higher than the P250 million recorded in the same period last year.

Hocheng assistance vice president Sam Lu said the significantly higher export figure was attributed to the increasing confidence of foreign buyers in the brand.

"The Filipinos' creativity and excellent craftsmanship are among the backbones of the HCG brand," said Lu during the company's product presentation yesterday at the World Trade Center.

The company official also said Hocheng was tapping more markets for its products to be able to sustain growth in exports.

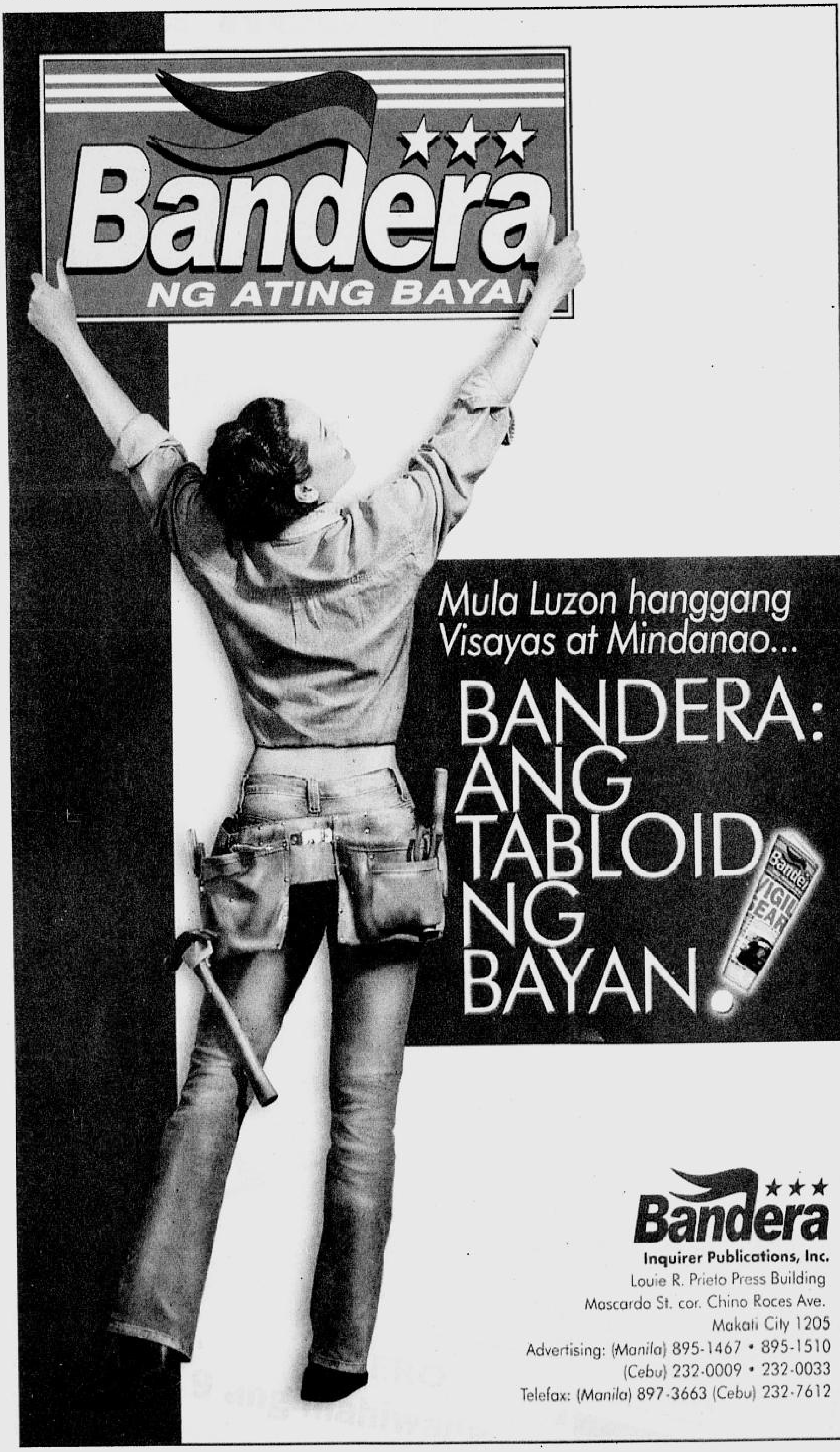
"We want to export to every corner of the world and show the kind of quality that Filipinos can produce," said Lu.

Hocheng—whose current markets abroad include Taiwan, Japan, Korea, India, Kuwait and Lebanon—earmarks 80 percent of its production for exports.

Lu said the company, which has 500 outlets nationwide, was also expecting to increase its annual domestic sales following the introduction of its latest products, such as the U2 series.

Aside from the U2 series, Hocheng produces various bathroom product lines, including Jupiter, Legato and Legend.

Hocheng, an ISO-certified firm, recently started the $5-million expansion of its manufacturing facility at the First Cavite Industrial Estates in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The project is expected to be completed in April 2004.



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Quota-free system worries garment sector

A WAKE-UP call has been sounded over the fate of the country's garment industry in the advent of a quota-free world economy.

In a speech before the recent 2nd MAP CEO International Conference held at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel, Bernadine Siy, chair of Fil-Pacific Apparel Inc. (Fil-Pac), said that "while we are preoccupied with a seemingly endless stream of crises, a far greater crisis has been apparently side swept from national consciousness."

Siy referred to the expiration of the World Trade Organization-initiated Agreement on Textile and Clothing (ATC) on Jan. 1, 2005.

This development, Siy stressed, might lead to the demise of the dollar-earning garment industry, which for 30 years has not only significantly helped our economy but also provided steady employment to over 400,000 workers, and livelihood to their families.

The industry contributes $3 billion or 8 percent of the country's total export earnings yearly.

Siy made an appeal for the industry and government to close ranks and immediately find solutions to the problem.

"The government should convene a knowledgeable ad hoc multi-sectoral body and, among other measures, initiate an RP-US Free Trade Agreement to ensure growth and continued market access for exports," she proposed.

Siy said the development should not be viewed as a doomsday scenario but as an upbeat challenge for staggering growth.

The Fil-Pac executive noted that while the industry has only a few good cards in its favor, "these cards, if played right, can be a good platform to transform the industry into a winner in the new environment."

Among these cards, she said, were the industry's 1,000 companies and owners with solid expertise and experience in the business, almost half-a-million highly skilled workers, longstanding relationship with customers and suppliers worldwide and an efficient work infrastructure and well-oiled business processes.

Equally important, she added, was the immediate need for the industry to seek out new lucrative foreign markets and bolster local garment production.

GOINGS-ON

No. 1 underwriter

DEUTSCHE Bank, Europe's second-largest bank by assets, has continued to expand its global platform franchise by being the No. 1 underwriter of international bonds for the first time in the third quarter of 2003. According to data compiled by Bloomberg, Deutsche Bank has underwritten international bonds amounting to $47.261 billion in the third quarter this year, ahead of Citigroup which underwrote $45.795 billion in the same period.

Deutsche Bank's US dollar bond franchise has continued to make tremendous strides, largely due to continued investment by the firm in trading, sales and research expertise. Market share has risen steadily in the league tables in US Debt from No.10 in 2000 to No. 5 this year.

Enrico Cruz, chief country officer for Deutsche Bank in the Philippines, said this growth "reflects that US and non-US borrowers have in Deutsche Bank's ability to place US dollar denominated bonds."

Leadership confab at AIM

THE INTERNATIONAL Movement of Development Managers (IMDM), a professional network composed of graduates of the Asian Institute of Management program, is convening a national leadership conference with the theme "Building a Community of Leaders and Organizations Through Good Governance."

The conference will be held on Dec. 1,2 and 3 at the AIM Conference Center, said conference chair Henry S. Tenedero and program director Jesus Alfonso Z. Carpio.

Among the plenary speakers are: Dr. Federico M. Macaranas, dean of the AIM Center for Development Management; Edward L. Fereira, president of the Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP); Edgardo S. Limon, president, Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex); Erlinda B. De Guzman, president of Galing Pilipino Movement; Jeremy Cliff, managing director of Pilipinas Shell Exploration, and Coratec T. Jimenez, IMDM president.

The three-day confab will have hands-on workshops aimed at generating a collective effort in solving problems, exchange best practices and tools in projects and program management.

Wal-Mart, Target cool US holiday sales hopes

CHICAGO—Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Target Corp. on Thursday cooled holiday shopping expectations with muted outlooks for the vital retail season, dimming hopes that a rebounding US economy would bring robust sales.

Wal-Mart, the world's biggest company by revenues, also reported quarterly earnings just shy of Wall Street expectations.

Target's quarterly earnings met expectations thanks to strength at its namesake discount stores and big profits in its credit card operations.

But the No. 2 discount chain said it may miss Wall Street forecasts for the current quarter—which includes the key Thanksgiving-to-Christmas holiday season.

Many Wall Street analysts and industry consultants have predicted a strong holiday shopping season, bolstered by an improving job market and rising consumer sentiment.

Reuters

Australia brings forward Cairns meet to kickstart trade talks

SYDNEY—Australian Trade Minister Mark Vaile announced Friday he has brought forward a meeting of the Cairns Group of agricultural exporting countries by seven months in an effort to energize floundering world trade talks.

"We are working with our Cairns Group partners to ensure that agriculture remains at the top of the Doha round agenda," Vaile said, referring the the World Trade Organization (WTO) talks.

"To ensure that this happens we will be holding our annual Cairns Group meeting in February next year — rather than September — in Costa Rica."

The Cairns group is collection of 17 countries which was formed in 1986 to put agriculture on the global trade agenda.

Australia is the current chair, while the group comprises New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, Paraguay, the Philippines, Thailand, Uruguay and Bolivia.

Vaile said a failure by WTO members to reach agreement at talks held in Cancun, Mexico, earlier this year was disappointing.

"Cancun was disappointing but we can recover from it," Vaile said.

"It will require commitment and real leadership — especially on the part of the major economic powers, Japan, the EU (European Union) and the United States, as well as Australia as head of the Cairns Group.

"It will require a major effort in agriculture — the area of the negotiations where the vast majority of members demand real liberalization and reform."

AFP

Japan economy grew 0.6% in Q3

TOKYO—Japan's economy expanded by a bigger-than-expected 0.6 percent in July-September from the previous quarter, helped by firm exports and healthy capital spending.

The figure was slightly better than expectations of economists, who had produced a median forecast of 0.3 percent GDP growth in the third quarter.

The government data released on Friday also showed real GDP grew 2.2 percent on an annualized basis, compared with a median forecast of 1.2 percent growth.

"I think the strong reading is largely due to better-than-expected capex plans. Stronger external demand and capex are offsetting weakness in consumer spending and public works," said Kiichi Murashima, economic and market analysis director at Nikko Citigroup.

"Looking ahead, I expect a similar pace of growth to continue until the end of this business year (next March)," he said.

"Our house view is that the dollar will recover, but if Japan keeps showing such good data going forward, I think it will push the yen up further," he added.

"It was actually pretty close to our forecast. The main points are that consumption was flat as expected, capex up as expected. So I think it's still being driven basically by capex and exports," said HSBC chief economic Peter Morgan.

"The other thing to note is that the nominal growth is still flat so the growth is still being driven by the deflator declines and we think those are being significantly exaggerated by the calculation method. So the actual growth rate is probably only about half of the official growth rate," he said.

Reuters

European policymakers see slow growth

VIENNA—Euro zone growth may not reach full throttle until 2005, European Central Bank policymakers said on Thursday, backing economists' views that ECB interest rates may well be on hold for some time.

The tempering of growth forecasts came as data showed Europe's biggest economy, Germany, had pulled out of recession in the third quarter while France, which narrowly avoided two quarters of contraction in the first half, also expanded.

But ECB Vice President Lucas Papademos said at a financial conference in Vienna that the upswing which began in the second half of this year is expected to gain momentum only slowly.

"The pace of recovery is likely to increase only gradually. Consequently, annual real GDP growth is projected to approach its potential level in 2005," he said.

This amounts to a pull-back in the central bank's June forecast that growth in the 12-nation monetary region would get back to full speed, or its potential growth rate of 2-2.5 percent, by the end of next year.

ECB Governing Council Member Klaus Liebscher said that while he was cautiously optimistic for a stronger recovery in 2004, he does not expect a full rebound until later. Their comments suggest that when the central bank updates its economic projections next month, staff may revise down their June projections for 1.9-2.9 percent growth in 2004.

ECB Governing Council Member and Bank of Spain Governor Jaime Caruana, speaking in Tokyo on Thursday, likewise steered clear of saying that euro zone growth would hit its full stride next year, although it would progressively gather momentum.

Reuters

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Editor **Marge Enriquez**

Copy Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
Art Director **Antonio Salac Santos**
Graphic Artist **Genie L. Lagman**

E-mail: pr_elan@inquirer.com.ph
pdi_elan@inquirer.com.ph

'Wilderness of waffle'

By Marge C. Enriquez

AN EDITOR described the global media as a "wilderness of waffle." In this communications-driven world, it gets extremely perplexing when we try to fish the truth out of a babble of misrepresentation, spin, muddle, hypocrisy and fluff.

Much of the data we need to evaluate, clarify and make decisions come in variable proportions. Unfortunately, the vagueness and clutter of what we hear or read penetrate more deeply than we should allow them to.

For instance, it's next to impossible to find an honest-to-goodness public servant. Smokescreens, distortions and denials have become standard answers to the call for accountability. Thus, status quo is maintained and politicians' personal agendas are advanced. Ditto with show biz, whose denizens are experts in the game of hype and deflection.

Not fun

In sport, playing the game for its own sake is almost unacceptable. The reward or monetary gain takes precedence above all other motivations. The sheer joy of taking up athletics is a thing of the past, and many individual and team sports have turned into cold businesses—which is hardly playful.

Likewise, contradicting perspectives on health and well-being abound. What's really good or bad for your health? It's hard to say when you're lost in a jungle of advice, well-meaning or otherwise. Food supplements are said to be necessary for the system, some say, but others insist these are merely flushed out. Counselors claim sex is great exercise and an essential ingredient for a healthy relationship. But what about the dangers of sexually transmitted diseases?

We are easily swayed by the loudest or most recent voice and then we complain about being victimized by propaganda. Is there any place or field left, where personal views and statements are free of hidden agendas, untainted by desire for recognition, and devoid of commercial interest? It's difficult to heed one voice in the jungle that sheds light on how to hurdle the challenges of living and flourishing in this stifling, bruising, nanosecond world, without suspecting it of religious indoctrination.

In this culture of *pakikisama* or cooperating with news sources, I myself have a soft spot for acceding to requests for coverages of special events or whatever. I, too, am guilty of contributing to the grids in the waffle. Once in a while, by a miraculous twist, there emerges a viewpoint beyond PR puff or propaganda, an approach removed from manipulation. It's the voice of authentic human experience. The honesty and purity pulls our attention.

But for this issue, expect heaps of butter and whipped cream!

> Is there any place or field left, where personal views and statements are free of hidden agendas, untainted by desire for recognition, and devoid of commercial interest?

what's inside

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whew! c4

wow! c6

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By Bea P. Valdes
Contributor

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HAIR AND MAKEUP: GEOFF SIMPSON AND KERWYN CUEVAS

"There are certain images that imprint themselves on our mind. These are mine: the rustling hull of a tanker on its side, its skeleton battered by see-sawing spires of white capped water; a cluster of small houses huddled close to a giant outcrop of wind-tortured stone; dozens of waterfalls cascading on thick beds of wild fern. And the road itself–a long, dark ribbon of asphalt trimmed with a lace like rail of steel–etched starkly against a craggy backdrop."—Wynn Wynn Ong, "On the Road to Ilocos"

In the mid-afternoon, I catch Wynn Wynn Ong tripping the light fantastic. Her new jewelry collection is strewn across the dining table; an emporium of aquamarine slabs and blooming amethysts, clusters of smoky topaz, handles of gold-leafed horn, sprays of crystal frozen into briolettes, and tiny oysters that, with her protean flair, she has transformed into earrings. Before us is a reservoir of semi-precious stones seemingly culled from some languid sea. They shimmer more than sparkle; they own a quiet elegance. I have stumbled across her secret universe where vegetal and marine collide.

When I ask which books fascinate her, one of her choices deftly exposes the moment: Arundhati Roy's "God of Small Things."

In the past two years, Wynn Wynn has been pivotal in the emergence of the cosmopolitan artisan in the Philippines. She has inadvertently spearheaded a movement towards bigger, bolder, organic ornaments. At no other time has there been so much interest and demand for semi-precious jewelry, or has a single designer been so synonymous with the trend. She is the idea's Germinator, with heavy-hitting Total Recall.

Beyond wire work

And, she is back, preparing for her new collection's launch at Firma, Greenbelt 3 on Nov. 20. But beyond wire work, which many novices attempt and in which elements jostle for space and attention, she has expanded into crafted silver and gold. Wynn Wynn explains that one collection consists of a selection of items in 14k gold, still very organic and carefully carved. Another group, which she calls her sculptural line, is made of 19.5 percent silver, onto which five microns of gold leaf is applied. And due to persistent prodding by male friends, she is also starting the men's collection. She stresses that there is "no mold for anything," ensuring that each piece is truly one of a kind.

To her, every work is "an art piece."

My first impressions are of a sub-aqua Art Nouveau style, suggesting a meditation process during which intriguing stones have been selected and arranged, more clustered than cluttered, then gathered into a symphony of textures and color (versus the imitation-flatterers who are still indulging creative cacophony). This is a focused body of work, strong and elemental and gracefully Asian. Her lines are fluid, yet modern. She is a self-proclaimed perfectionist who shuns symmetry. Stones of rare and unusual cuts excite her, and she goes through great lengths to procure them. When a supplier calls her about a special batch, she has been known to fly over to see the spread, sometimes spending more on air fare than on the purchase. She laughingly refers to her materials as "stash." There are stones that she may keep for 20 years before they are used in a piece. Others head of to production straight from the plucking.

Wynn Wynn's pieces easily fall into the realm of luxury, not just fashion. Like her manner, there are no rah-rah statements or Sex in the City asides. Even in her design vernacular, there are no punch lines, only an ongoing dialogue with the wearer. Her ornaments are not whimsical but witty, articulate, anecdotal pieces.

She picks up a necklace, which surprisingly yawns into three segments. Placed upon her neck, it nests perfectly on her clavicle. It is twice as stunning when worn. An ornament is a two-dimensional object. But with her jewelry, a third dimension is created: the "impact of association" between the object and its wearer.

Though not trained as a gemologist, Wynn Wynn has had an almost life-long affinity with jewelry. She was born in Burma, where she lived until age three. There, where family wealth usually came in the form of gold and precious stones, women grew up with jewelry.

Auspicious start

She recalls that her grandmother had a large aquarium in which uncut rubies and sapphires were used instead of pebbles. She spent her teenage years in Vienna until her family moved to Manila. She stresses that she is very proud of her cultural heritage—she returned to Burma for a while to "learn how to read, write and speak the language"—but feels Filipino in every other way. She went to Assumption for high school and college, finishing with a degree in Business Management and Finance. Then, she took up her Masters in Ateneo specializing in Education.

Over coffee, I listen as she discusses her passion for teaching and learning, for travel and writing. Ben Okri's "The Famished Road" is another of her favorite books. She is a member of the Women Writer's Workshop, a creative writing foundation which has published two books, one of which has won the national book award. Called "Why I Travel," the anthology is about the joys of exploration, and ultimately, a celebration of what is home.

Through its proceeds, the WWW supports indigent scholars. Wynn Wynn believes the process of creation is a privilege. "We had one student whose father was a fisherman. He didn't even have money for bus fare, and sometimes had to pawn his books." That scholar is now a prize-winning poet.

Wynn Wynn stopped teaching eighth-grade Asian Studies at the International School, "because my son, at the time, was going off to college, and I thought he might need my help—which of course he did not." She decided to stay in Manila one summer when the whole family flew to Boston. She used the time alone to design jewelry for herself. For a long time, her closest friends had no idea she was doing this. Good friend Michael Salientes, one of Manila's top stylists, found out and encouraged her to continue, and has been a staunch supporter since. (On the day of this interview, half of Wynn Wynn's collection was with Michael for a shoot.)

Her cheering squad has likewise grown—family, friends, and devotees who enthusiastically await what she comes up with next. In fact, her beautiful horn-handle bags are already pre-sold. She cultivates a unique mix of delicious greed and faith in her clients, who are wont to say, "I don't care what it will become; it's mine. I trust it will be beautiful."

Michael explains: "I've known Wynn Wynn for 20 years. I never expected her to be designing jewelry. At the same time, I am not surprised because she has always had a good eye for design, and is very stylish herself. She is the perfect example of hard-work-plus-creativity-equals-success."

Although there have been offers from companies abroad to market her work, opening the doors for a larger demand, Wynn Wynn would rather keep her collection limited. "I don't like marketing; I'm thrilled if people like what I like," she says simply. "At this moment, this is where I choose to be, this stage is where I am happy."

Her trademark icon is the Naga, a winged hybrid of serpent and dragon. Traditionally, it guards the entrance to Buddhist temples. Part of her Burmese ancestry, this tiny image encircles the clasp of her bracelets and necklaces. "That's the brand name actually, Naga," she chuckles, "but usually someone spots my work and just says, 'That's a Wynn Wynn.'"

Metro Wear '04 overload!

By Marge C. Enriquez

TO strengthen its presence in the competitive publishing world, Metro Magazine has been bullish about marketing itself through special events and tie-ups with business partners that tap the same high-end market.

For all the designers' enthusiasm, evident was the chronic problem of lack of fabrics and technical skills with which to interpret their ideas

This year, Metro is proudly showing off the public its new home grounds at the ELJ Center, which serves ABS-CBN's multi-media companies and is also a multi-purpose center. Recently, it housed designer Joe Salazar's creations and last Halloween, a TV studio was converted into a runway.

Metro Magazine's first fashion show, "Metro Wear '04," was the most logical spin-off for a lifestyle magazine that was, for advertising purposes, originally fashion-oriented. Produced by Notenough Circuses, the show looked like a special fashion issue with color and design themes.

To me, it was like a reportage of the state of the fashion design industry today, but one that left the audience to make its own conclusions. My personal observations about the show aren't anything new; I had been writing about them for some time.

Unlike the fashion pioneers who defied conventions and drew influence from foreign cultures, our designers are largely influenced by what they read in the magazines and saw on television. Though in Paris and Milan the current season has pointed to the dress and a return to ultra-femininity, the Goddess Dressing trend in variations was order of the Metro night.

I had a visual overload of drapery, cut-on-the-bias gowns, clingy fabrics, pleats and swags. There were also designers who did ethnic, sportswear, tailoring, streetwear, deconstruction and country casuals. Younger designers did embroidery and very subtle beadwork.

Fingers crossed

Since it was a summer collection, the back was presented as the new erogenous zone, and feminine curves took precedence. If the mini skirt were an economic indicator for summer, then it looks like things will figuratively and literally look up by the mid-'04. In fact Women's Wear Daily describes the "hemline indicator" as "the notoriously accurate forecasting tool that when hemlines go north, so does the economy." Rising skirts occur in a free-spirit environment, which is said to be healthy for the stock market. Businessmen are thus crossing their fingers that after a cycle of tumult, erratic economic climate and inflation, business will be jump-started anew.

I had a bias towards the ready-to-wear designers such as Vittorio Barba, Anthony Nocom and Robi Lolin because their clothes were, foremost, functional and well-constructed. And they used the right fabrics. These designers have learned the hard way how to make clothes that work, thanks to hard-nosed customers and tough merchandisers.

Barba's was the most applauded. He went against the current with a '50s inspired silhouette—wasp waist, full hips and skirts just grazing the knee. He was reportedly inspired by a French poster with a rockabilly theme: teenagers at the Seine in the '50s. The girls wore big skirts and their dates wore suits. Highlight of the collection was the handiwork. A stunner was the strapless number with fine strips of denim intricately sewn onto the dress said to have taken three weeks to make. It also took two weeks to interweave the strips for the waffle shawl. The audience also adored the slim dress with an alluring back detail of strips of cotton lycra. His use of basketball jersey, replete with airholes, for after-six dressing was also innovative.

His mens' wear line also carried the loose silhouettes of the '50s. And, since it was summer, deconstructed parts of the suit for whimsy.

Nocom stuck to his signature knits, gabardines and linens, although he favored cooler textures and softer shades of green and blue. In a sea of over-the-top designs, his easy-fitting silhouettes and shorter jackets stood out for their simplicity and preppie styling. Robbi Lolin combined his cutting-edge trademark with his sportswear background as senior designer for Kickers. Lolin played with the basic sportswear pieces by playing around with layering, creating vivid patches, and mixing fabrics. Terrycloth bottoms were accentuated with satin side stripes. To create the effect of men wearing two layers of pants, the top was in satin while the bottom was in cotton twill. Dong Omaga Diaz fused the Medieval theme—corsets and embroidery—with punk slashes.

For all the designers' enthusiasm, evident was the chronic problem of lack of fabrics and technical skills to interpret the designs. The letdowns were incorrect cutting, lack of functionality, wrong proportions and imbalance in design, especially in the men's tailoring. There was also the baroque sensibility of excessive detail. For a Metro Manila summer collection, some of the clothes used lurex and wool! Well that's pardonable only if the clothes are meant to be worn in a building with the aircon in full blast.

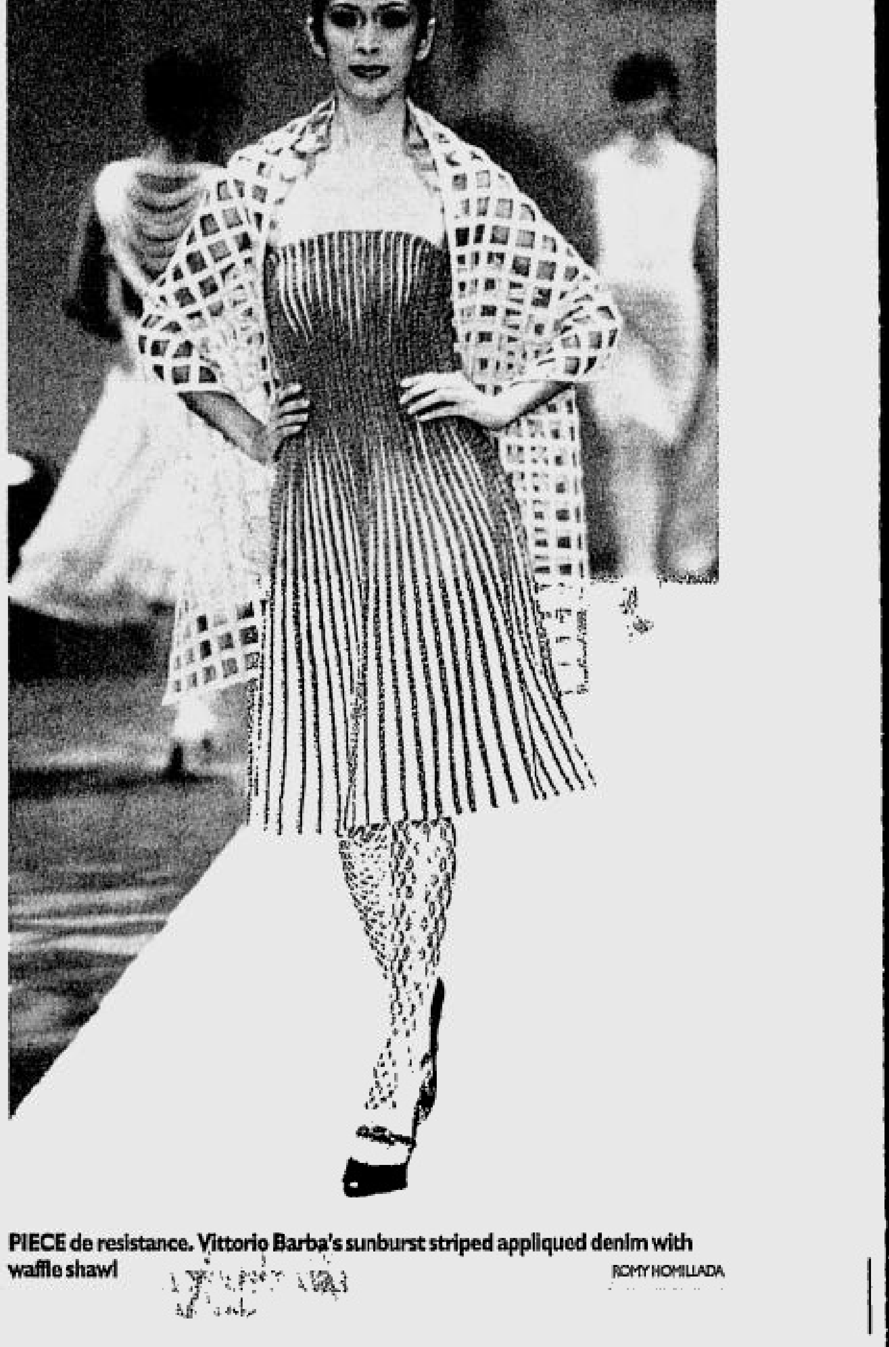
From a production viewpoint, the show was slick and fast-paced. The progression of the color themes were well thought of.

Slick show, though

For Halloween, Greenbelt Shopping Plaza featured eight lines from its list of stores. It was a good idea to hold it at Onstage Theater so that buyers could make a run for the rack during the weekend. The program was more about audience interaction rather than a fashion statement. It started with a rap band accompanied by a video. Every label was introduced with a short clip. There was even a short-circuit television to heighten the experience as models paraded down the aisles. The most outstanding pieces were those in Dita Ong's collection, derived from her collaboration with the Mangyans and Grace Nono's ethnic clothes—natural fabrics interpreted in basic cuts and adorned with local beadwork.

Meanwhile, I visited designer Joe Salazar a fortnight ago before he flew to Singapore for medical consultations. Contrary to rumors, battling with throat cancer though he was, he held himself very well. Although he could not talk—he communicated by writing—he showed the will to be well.

GRACE Nono's collection in Styllokal at Onstage



PIECE de resistance. Vittorio Barba's sunburst striped appliqued denim with waffle shawl

ROMY HOMILLADA

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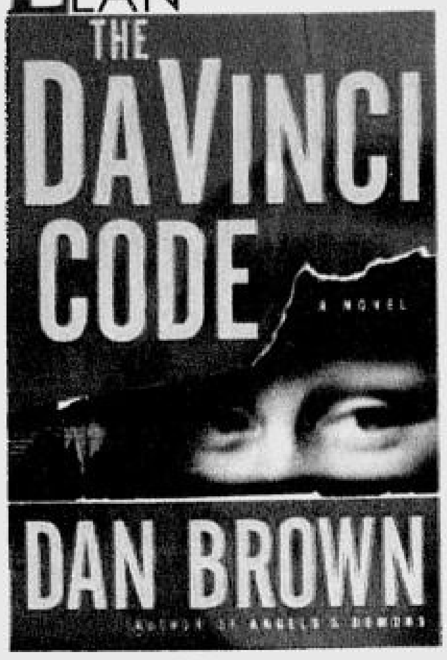


A cliffhanger at every turn

BOOK REVIEW

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

The Da Vinci Code
By Dan Brown
Doubleday 2003, 454 pages

IF YOU haven't had a friend or acquaintance gushing about a book called "The Da Vinci Code" already, you soon will. It's the kind of book you cannot keep to yourself. The bestseller has spent months on the top of the New York Times list and, to this day, continues to be number one by amazon.com sales ranking. I am told that even our own Powerbooks cannot keep it in stock, and I'm not surprised. I read the 400-plus pages in two days, stopping only to do what I could not avoid doing.

This erudite suspense novel has all the elements of a bestseller. It begins with a gripping prologue set in the Grand Gallery of the Louvre. Jacque Sauniere, the gallery curator is moments from his death. He manages to take off his clothes and draw a circle around himself to resemble Leonardo Da Vinci's famous drawing, "The Vitruvian Man," plus an anagram and the famous Fibonacci numerical sequence.

Soon enough, protagonist Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor of art history and religious symbologist introduced in Brown's previous book "Angels and Demons," is caught up in the mystery. Langdon, who was supposed to have met with Sauniere earlier that night, is wrongly accused of the murder. With the help of cryptologist Sophie Neveu, he soon finds himself embroiled in a breathless chase and virtual treasure hunt that involves the unlocking of secrets and mysteries dating back to the time of Christ.

It is impossible to say more without giving anything away. The Priory of Sion, Knights Templar, the Vatican prelature Opus Dei, the Divine Proportion and even the Holy Grail, are just a few of the subjects tackled in the book. At the very heart of the mystery is a sinister plot protected by a clandestine society that challenges Judeo-Christianity as we know it. The divinity of Jesus is questioned and the dark history of the Church is rehashed.

Sacrilege?

Some hard-core Catholics may find the suggestions a tad sacrilegious but I don't think "The Da Vinci Code" is an outright assault on the Catholic Church. It simply offers fascinating insights, not only on religion but on history and art as well. Though Brown hints at a misogynistic lie perpetuated by the Vatican, he back-pedals in the end and indirectly exonerates the Church of wrongdoing. I have to admit this was the only disappointing part of the book, because it felt like he decided to play safe after burdening the reader with a truckload of provocative conspiracy theories.

In some ways it shattered a lot of things that I believed. On the bright side, it gave me a new and better insight that has inspired me to read and know more about my faith. Ultimately it is a matter of empirical evidence vs religious devotion. Seemingly well-researched, Brown's book is dismissed by many scholars as pulp fiction trying to pass itself off as highbrow.

I say, if you want something deeply cerebral, read Umberto Eco. But if you want to be thrilled with a cliffhanger in every chapter, then read "The Da Vinci Code." Brown takes esoterica mainstream with this well-crafted novel that actually reads like a movie. The constant forward motion offers just the right amount of excitement to take the reader to another world.

All told, I was enthralled. I wanted to see Da Vinci's "Last Supper" and "Mona Lisa" again. I wanted to decipher more codes. I wanted to research on secret societies. I wanted to read the Bible. In short, I was hungry for more. Brown's writing has that effect. It sort of tells us that all the answers are out there, and that we just have to look. I finished the novel feeling like I read something with substance and yet knowing that I had a lot of fun. I cannot wait for Brown's next novel, which I hope will come soon, even if I'm sure he could retire on this one's royalties.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

'World's Most Stable Mind' speaks on wealth and relationships

By Georgina C. Solina
Contributor

IS IT possible for us humans to make God our constant companion?

Master yogi Dadi Janki has proven that anyone can have a loving relationship with God, no matter his religious background, by taking Him as an all-pervading energy.

Acknowledged worldwide as a woman of extraordinary wisdom and a mentor of mentors from India, Dadi Janki will be the special guest speaker in "Celebrating the Spirit" on Nov. 19, 6 p.m. at Aliw Theater, Star City Complex. The front act is the re-staging of the recent multi-media show "Dancing in the Light" based on Dadi's book, "Companion of God."

The show had a successful premiere last July 17 at Onstage Theater.

Dadi Janki is an international lecturer who has practiced meditation for 67 years. Scientists have dubbed Dadi(a title for "elder sister" in Hindi) as "The World's Most Stable Mind," having found her brain waves constantly in the delta state—as though in deep sleep—while performing regular activities.

Her visit to the Philippines is indicated by Chiron, the healing planet, in a positive aspect to Jupiter, planet of higher learning. Her being a master mentor is symbolized by Jupiter which, astrologically, is considered the home of the masters. On a personal level, the linkage between Jupiter and Chiron causes people to react very strongly to life-enhancing energies and go beyond sensory experiences. The energies say that the atmosphere will be very healing.

Profound energies

I have read many event charts such as the Gulf War, but none registers such profound energies as this forthcoming show. The event chart of the day shows a prominent alignment of planets Venus, Pluto, and Mercury all in Sagittarius (sign of God) in the seventh house of alliances. This blocks the energies Jupiter and Moon (emotions), yet positively connects to North Node (large groups).

Based on the arrangement of the planets at the exact time of the show, the message is to ask people to make a choice: to let the heart be open to the experience or to allow the rational mind to remain skeptical of new information. Mercury (human mind) conjoins Pluto (transformation) to be imbued with soul-consciousness; while Venus (human love) conjoins Pluto to be steeped in divine love.

Times have changed. Previously, people didn't want to hear anything about God. Today, with all the problems of the world, people have realized that they cannot perform the task of improving the quality of life just by themselves. Also, they have explored paradigms and philosophies in which God did not feature, and found those lacking. Thus, people are now interested in knowing more about Him.

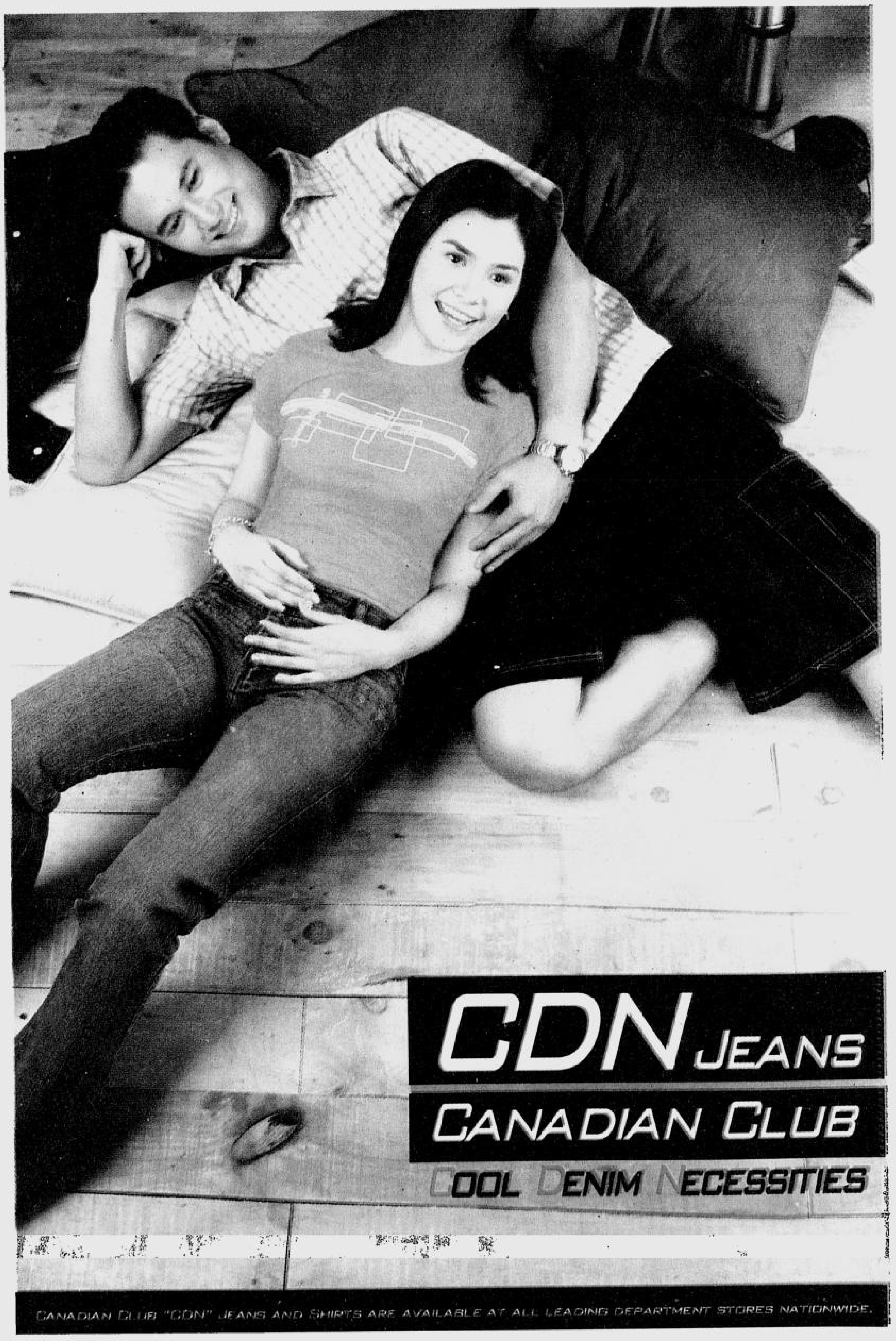
Dadi Janki counsels: "The connection with God is automatic for those who have faith. By faith, I mean as in the expression, 'Whatever has happened is good, whatever is going to happen will even be better.' In accepting this gem of wisdom, one must let go of his/her arrogance and make the intellect clean. The deeper your connection with God, the more power you receive. Everything in your life begins to feel easy. You become clean, sensible, and good."

Subtle transformative energies will be at work during "Dancing in the Light." Pluto (change) conjunct Venus indicates a fusion of Divine love with human love, which carries the message of Dadi Janki to a powerful point of clarity:

"When I give my heart to God alone, there is nothing but joy. Giving it to humans can create joy but also sorrow, because my original feelings of elevated, spiritual love for all are reduced to the limited. This is not a basis for constant joy."

Dadi will talk about wealth and relationships during the program, which starts at 6 p.m. sharp. For details, call 890-7960 or 922-9231.

The show is sponsored by Penshoppe, Westin Philippine Plaza, Human, Schwarzwalder, Sony Ericsson, Star Parks Corp., Congressional Spouses Foundation, Intercare Healthcare Systems, French Baker, AV1 Media, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Metro Magazine, NU 107, 92.3 Joey Rhythms and RX 93.1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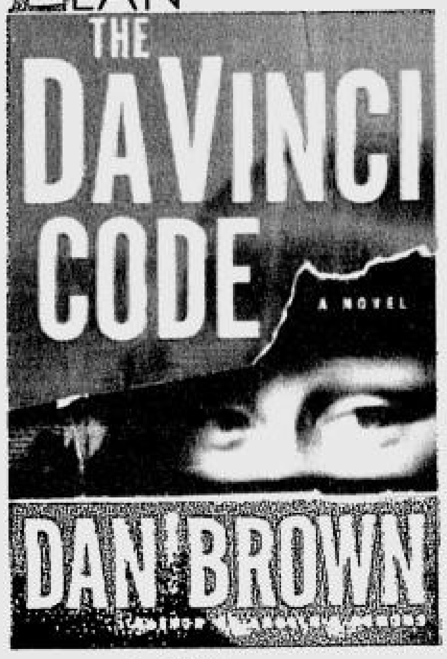

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PHOTOGRAPHIC DIRECTION BY ANTONIO SAMACANTOS
DIGITAL IMAGING BY MEOW FERRARO AND
SANDY FLORIA, E-KON: MANILA
MODEL: NICOLETTE BELL
CLOTHES BY THE YOUNG DESIGNERS GUILD
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FOOD COURTESY OF KWANG TONG
GLORIETTA 4

KNOTTED organza and crochet top with stretch khaki and white cotton 'hanky' skirt by James Reyes

A Feast of food and fashion

LILAC tulle tube dress with loose lace and beads by Dennis Lustico

DENIM baseball jacket with brocade lining. Black lycra tank and double belted mini-skirt by LZ Punzalan

BLEACHED orange cotton dress with huge rose and net embellishments by James Reyes

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ADDult education

By Martin Valdes
Contributor

"I was trying to daydream, but my mind kept wandering." —Steven Wright, comedian

THREE ADDers sat in a diner comparing notes. The first complained that he often found himself unable to sit still or to finish anything at the workplace. The second claimed she once rearranged the furniture several times in one day, till it went back to the original setup. The third...wait, I forgot the punch line.

Living with Attention Deficit Disorder is no joke.

According to epidemiological data, approximately four to six percent of the world's population exhibit symptoms related to ADD. While popular media has focused on the identification and treatment of this condition in kids and adolescents, it is *not* limited to childhood, and usually persists throughout a person's lifetime. It's a good bet that most children who have been diagnosed with ADD will continue to be thus challenged as adults, with significant impact on their lives—on the job, within the family, and in social relationships. My ex-girlfriend has ADD. Or so I tell myself at nights.

The acronyms ADD and ADHD are often used interchangeably, with the former being the more popular term and the latter the "official" clinical diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Many people use ADD as a generic term for all types of ADHD (which can be broken down to several subtypes), and ADD has gained popularity amongst the general public, in the media, and is even used by professionals. For the sake of consistency, I'm going to stick with ADD.

ADD is a diagnosis applied to children and adults who consistently display a certain characteristic behavior over a period of time. The core features include distractibility (poor sustained attention to tasks), impulsivity (impaired impulse control and delay of gratification) and hyperactivity (excessive activity and physical restlessness). The tendency to daydream, lose track of time, and misplace personal and familiar belongings; great excitability in groups, lack of attention regarding constraints or instructions, inability to sit still—these are some of the most notable signs of a person who may suffer from ADD (also political ambition, but that's another story). It is important to note that for this behavior to be considered as potential ADD, it should be excessive, long-term and pervasive. A person who displays these traits over a short period of time is just being difficult.

> Many people around us may have Attention Deficiency Disorder. They could be our teachers or students, politicians or priests, or (heaven help us) drivers of public utility vehicles

Myths dispelled

The past century has seen ADD go through an evolution of nomenclature as scientists attempted to describe and define the reasons behind observable traits exhibited by those afflicted. In 1902, they branded it "Defect of Moral Control," suggesting that there may be a spiritual aspect to the strange behavior. The mid-century gave birth to such flattering terms as "Post-Encephalitic Behavior Disorder," "Minimal Brain Dysfunction" and "Hyperkinetic Disorder of Childhood" that reflect the not-so-fabulous idea that persons displaying hyperactivity or impulsiveness, must have been dropped on their heads as babies. I wonder how many graduating students in the '60s were voted Most Likely To Be Diagnosed With Minimal Brain Dysfunction?

Medical research has dispelled the myths that ADD is caused by poor parenting, family problems, educational standards, an excess of television or video games, allergies, sugar intake or brain damage. More likely, ADD is caused by biological factors which influence neurotransmitter activity in certain parts of the brain, and which have a strong genetic basis. In layman's terms, the condition is determined before birth. It's more Kant and Galton than Pavlov and Freud, more DNA than MTV. An interesting piece of trivia supporting this theory is that more males than females suffer from ADD. I intend to use this statistic to excuse myself from inexplicable conduct in the future.

Much has been written and reported on the prevalence of ADD among today's youth, with research zeroing in on early identification and debates raging on the merits of several methods of treatment. Unfortunately, the same kind of attention has not been given adult sufferers. For one thing, it is generally accepted that hardly anyone develops ADD in adulthood, meaning the person must have had it all along, and if he's made it this far, then they must have learned how to cope with it. This faulty reasoning has naturally handicapped whole generations of older patients. It should be noted, too, that while such behavioral patterns have been studied for the past century, it is still a vague science at best, and the resources available to help patients are only now becoming widely accessible. In the Philippines, local demographics and information on the specific nature of the affliction are still being refined; treatments and help centers are still being developed.

All around us

Many people around us may have ADD. These could be our teachers or students, politicians or priests, or (heaven help us) drivers of public utility vehicles.

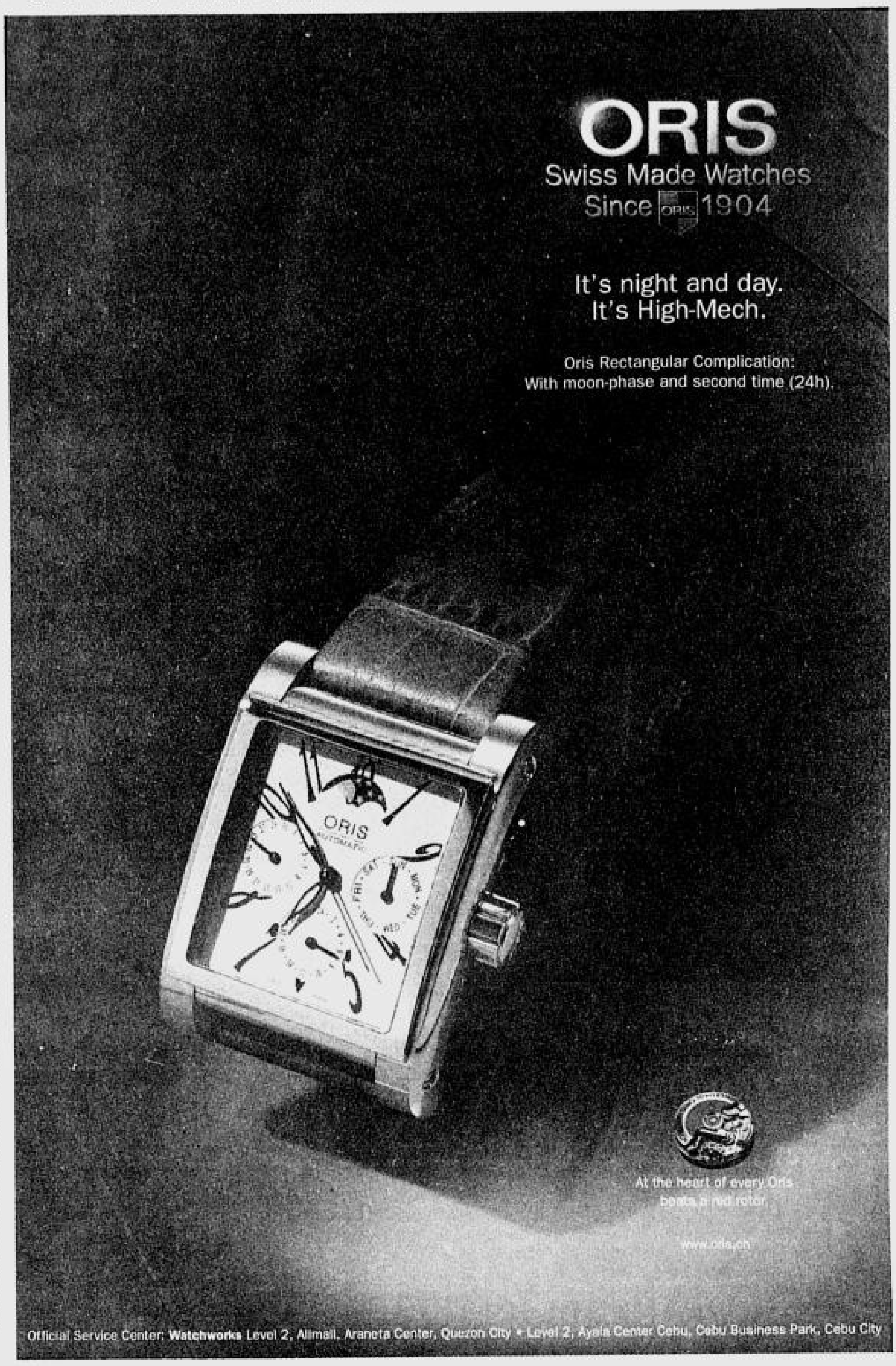
Identification is key to addressing the problem, after which the first crucial step is proper evaluation by a qualified health care professional—not your husband or beer buddies. The not-so-good news is that ADD cannot be entirely "cured," only managed over time, possibly over a lifetime.

The treatment and support that an ADDer receives is crucial and should be person-specific. Medication may often be used to help normalize brain activity, but it is not always required. Stimulants (Ritalin, Dexedrine) are commonly prescribed because they have proven effective for most patients. In the United States, many adults have benefited from behavior therapy, cognitive therapy, and ADD workshops to help manage social situations and develop coping skills. While the Philippines may not have these resources as of yet, there is a wealth of support groups online that are open to anybody needing help or information. Getting informed and staying informed is also imperative, if we must be able to identify and support those who may need help. Read books, magazines and newspaper clippings on the subject. Surf the net for updates and developments. Get involved in community fora.

Finally, maintain a positive attitude. Dr. Lynn Weiss, a US psychotherapist, stresses the silver lining. "One plus (about ADDers) is creativity," she says, "(considering) the fact that they march to a different drummer." The Internet has a list of famous people who exhibited confirmed ADD behavior—Einstein, Beethoven, Walt Disney, John Lennon—quite distinguished company, except that Sly Stallone made the same roster. To creativity, Weiss adds sensitivity and an acute awareness of detail—she sometimes calls this Attention Surplus Disorder. While ADD is a possible inconvenience, it does not have to be a handicap, or an obstacle to a normal, happy life.

Living with ADD is no joke, but a sufferer sometimes finds the perfect analogy for the situation in the case of a good joke with a forgotten punch line. Fortunately, we are approaching that stage of awareness where the tip of our tongue is not so far away.

... so the third ADDer exclaims, "Thank God, nothing like that has ever happened to me!" and proceeds to knock on wood. Whereupon, he looks around with suspicion and demands, "Who's there?"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'Haute' food in Manila

By Meluchi A. Rivera
Contributor

LEAVE it to the French to take any object beyond the realm of the ordinary. Long acknowledged as a seat of high art, fashion and cuisine, France produces some of the world's best perfume, clothing, and yes, food, glorious food.

Who but the French can develop sparkling wine as heady as champagne? Or cheese as intoxicating as brie and camembert? Indeed, who but the French would ritually force-feed fowl to make a delicacy out of the engorged liver? And who but the French would trust the instincts of swine enough to pursue the gastronomic potential of the subterranean fungi we now know as truffle?

France's culinary heritage is steeped in a loving tradition of excellence that runs long, wide. Mundane products like spices and condiments, coffee, tea, jams, marmalades and jellies are made with such fastidiousness, that they command premium prices in markets around the world. Even chocolates, delectable confections more identified with the Belgians and Swiss, have been given the "haute" treatment by France's purveyor of fine foods.

First-class

Two venerable names in French luxury food are Hédiard (éd-i-ar) and Fauchon (fosh-ón), whose flagship stores at Paris' chic Place del Madeleine, near the Opera, the Concorde and the Champs Elysees are destinations unto themselves. Their fine offerings are now available in Manila via The Confiserie at the Podium and Rockwell.

Vanessa Figueroa was responsible for bringing in these two premium brands which, in her own words, "are to food what BMW and Mercedes Benz are to cars." An avowed foodie, this passionate entrepreneur has filled The Confiserie's modestly sized booths with stuff of a gourmand's wet dream. Bottles of red and white wine, tins of fine loose teas, coffee, biscuits, jars of fruit preserves, spices, oils, vinegars, mustards and boxes of chocolates packaged in Fauchon's gold and pink, and Hediard's red and black, can now be had without leaving the country.

"These are brands that I would eat; brands that I would buy; brands I would proudly give as gifts," Figueroa says.

What The Confiserie offers is indulgence, with products that nourish the body and uplift the soul or, in the very least, expands the mind. This writer sampled some products recently and can attest to the power of, say, a box of Hediard's fine chocolates to lift the veil of ignorance from the mind's eye. It is like flying first class; afterwards, coach is never the same.

The box of chocolate fins I speak of has sixteen pieces of dipped chocolate made from premium cocoa beans, fresh butter, natural vanilla, honey, sugar and syrup. The mixture is then flavored with either Arabica coffee, hazelnut praline, white chocolate, Earl Grey tea, crushed almonds and salted caramel. Ingredients are always top-of-the-line and, by themselves, are already too chic for words: for instance, the salted caramel variant uses only *fleur de sel*, literally salt flower, the most delicate of salt flakes.

At its snootiest

Thus one gets mounds of wonderful confections, each with a strong chocolate flavor, some intense and bitter (the chocolat noir and the café), others mildly nuanced (the Earl Grey and the cinnamon), and all with a luxuriant consistency.

The chocolates are but the tip of the iceberg. More gourmet experiences await those who go for, say, Fauchon's apple tea; or Hediard's line of herbs and spices. Figueroa reveals that other delights like the much-vaunted *fleur de sel*, Fauchon's exotic ice cream line, and the 19th century Italian brand Peck will also be available soon at The Confiserie. Further down the road, she plans to open a bigger outlet and broaden her product line. Filipino gourmands may soon be able to serve duck confit or escargots at home via pre-packed meals from Fauchon. Call it instant food at its snootiest.

A cautionary note to casual shoppers: prices may cause severe eye-widening and hyperventilation, especially among the uninitiated. The cost of my little adventure with the chocolate bonbons equals that of a three-course hotel meal. Figueroa admits that by definition, Fauchon and Hediard are premium brands and may not be for everyone. Expats and frequent travelers are now The Confiserie's main patrons but, she says, "there are those among us who are very discerning—people who are not necessarily moneyed, but are the elite when it comes to their taste in food."

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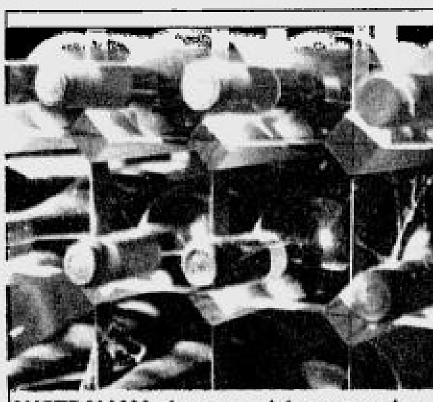

AUSTRALIAN wines are gaining reputation for their consistent quality.

Aussie wine this way comes

IT IS common knowledge that red wine—taken sparingly—is good for the health.

The Harvard Medical School has found that Australian red wine is exceptional. The elements found in red wine and some plant products have been shown to imitate the life-extending results of a calorie-controlled diet, such as preventing age-related diseases. A compound known as resveratrol—found in grapes and red wine—was proven to prolong the lifespan of yeast cells by up to 80 per cent.

Wines from regions with critical growing conditions, such as Australia, contain more resveratrol than those which use grapes grown in friendlier environments. The dry ripening conditions heighten a wine's flavor and stimulate resveratrol production. For better results, Australian wine makers allow their grapes to become slightly stressed.

This information could be a sales pitch for the importation of Australian wine in the country. Bullish about expanding their market in Asia, Australians are finding ways to make their wines more accessible to Filipino consumers.

Is the nation of beer quaffers ready for wine?

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PHOTO BY WIG TYSMANS

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OFF • CAM

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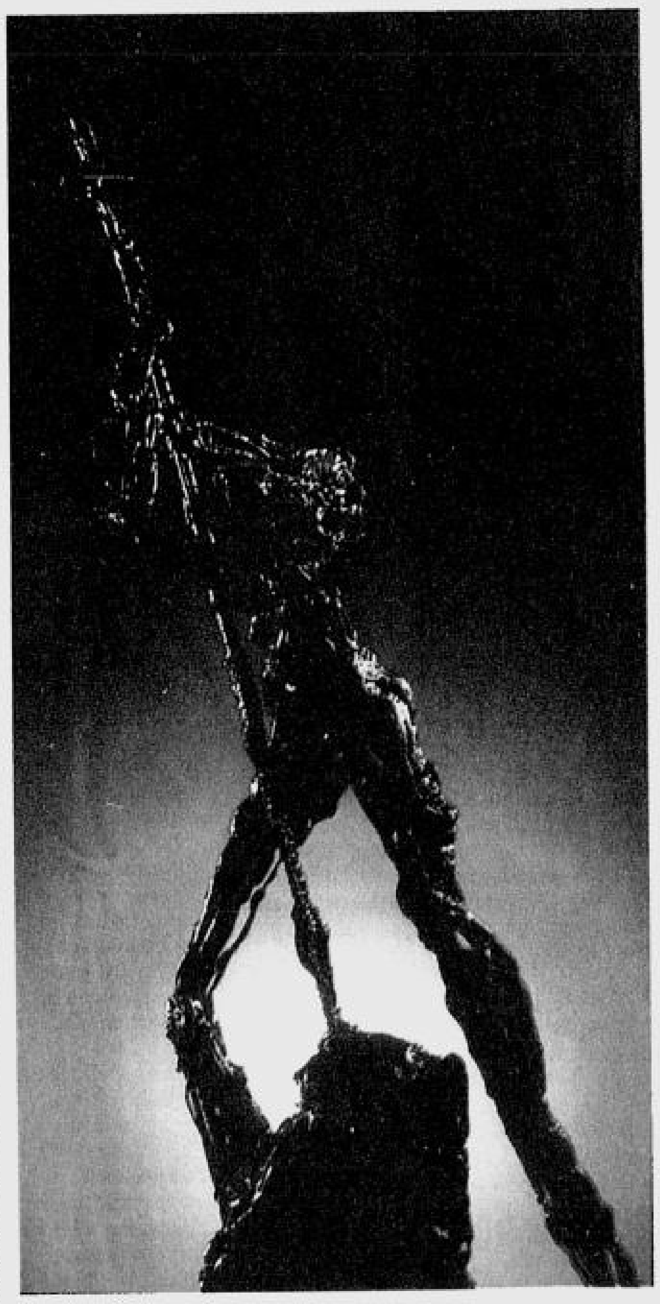

MOTION ... STILLNESS

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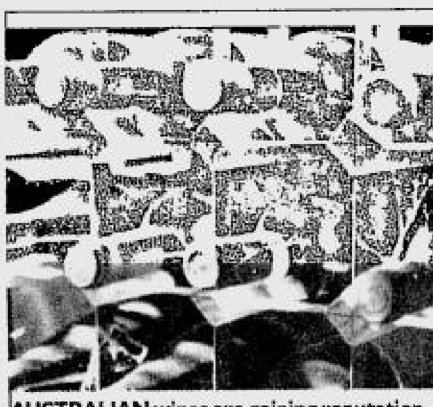

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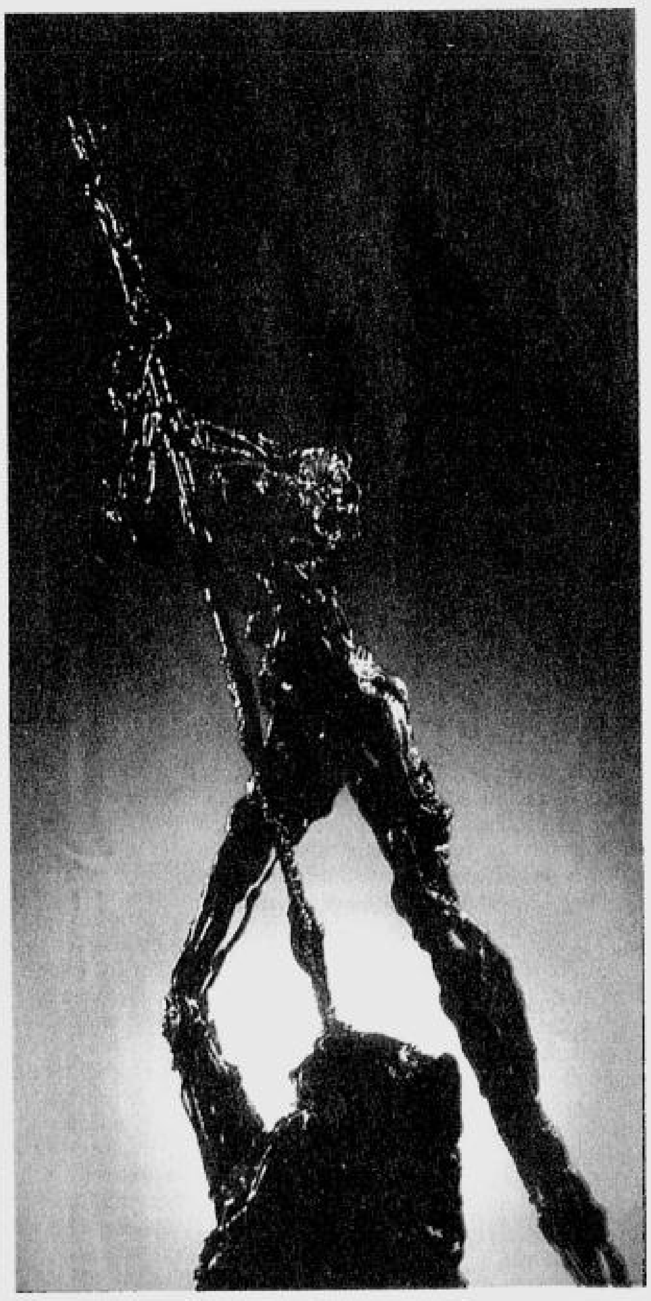

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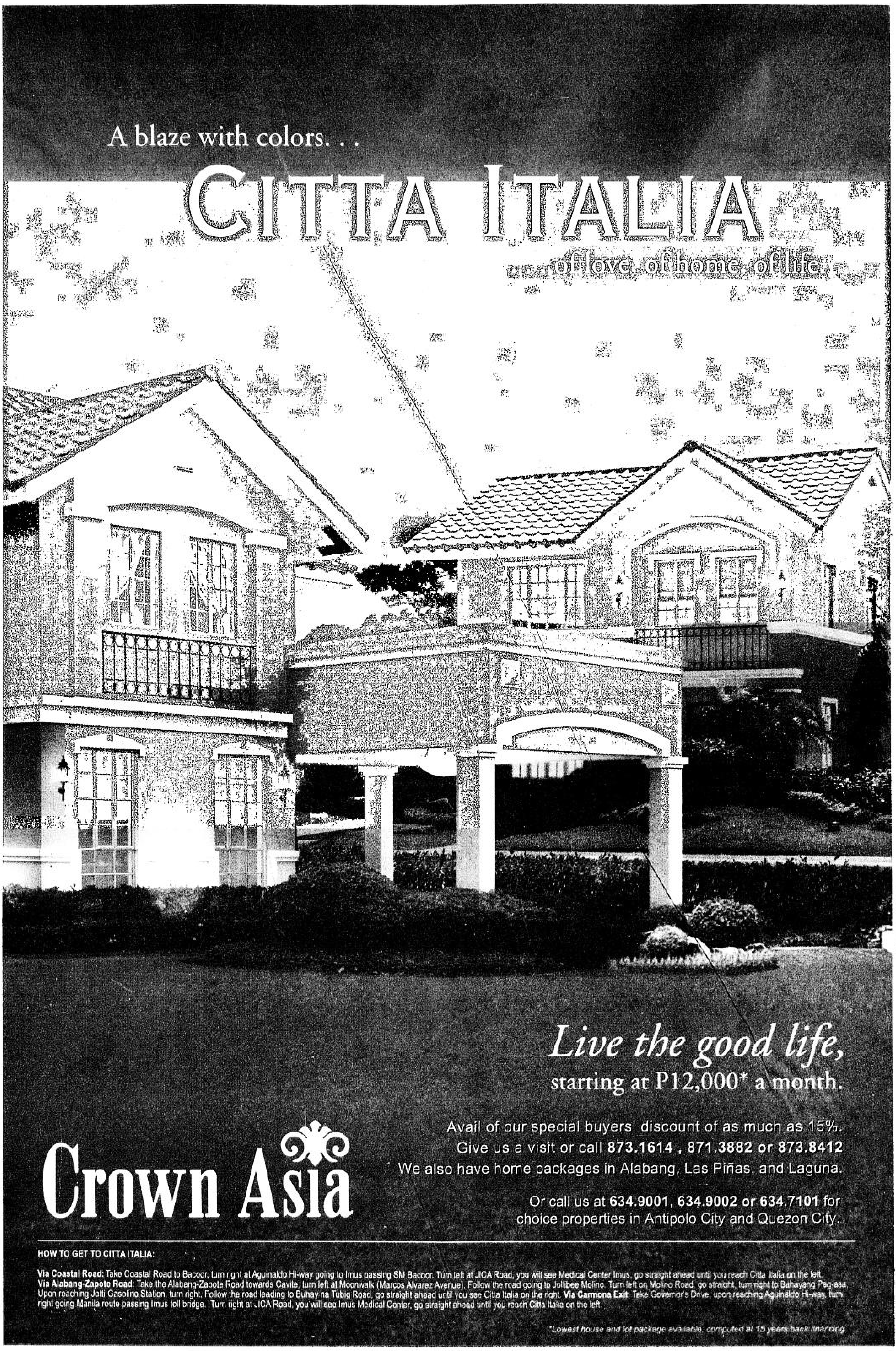

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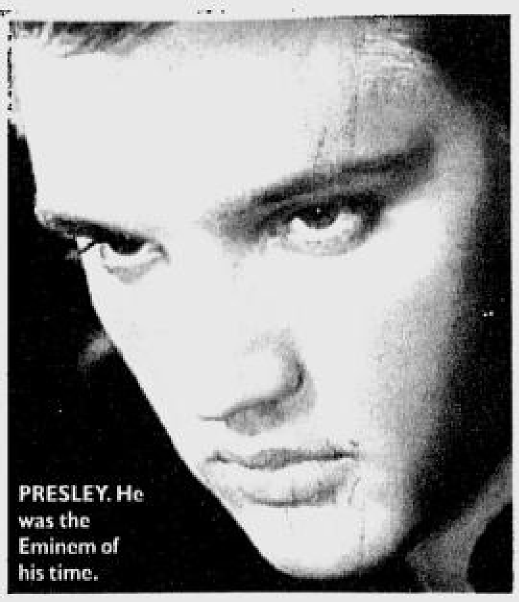
SATURDAY Special
Editor Nestor U. Torre

Elvis remembered in special tribute



PRESLEY. He was the Eminem of his time.

By Nestor U. Torre

ELVIS Presley may or may not be the greatest or most influential entertainer who ever lived, but one thing is sure: many show biz stars think the world of him and his music. That was made abundantly clear last Nov. 4, when Star World telecast "Elvis Lives," its tribute to the pioneering white rock star 25 years after his death.

Celebrated pelvis

Many singing stars were interviewed for the special tribute, and most of them heaped praises on Elvis' head—and on his celebrated pelvis. Some of the stellar raves:

"He wasn't afraid to be real, exuding a lot of sexual energy that others kept hidden. But he also had a vulnerable side to him that balanced his rawness nicely."

"Elvis was the best-looking rock singer ever. That was a big part of his success. Also his blatant sensuality, and the fact that he wasn't ashamed to enjoy it."

"He stopped white America in its tracks. He shocked people because he looked like he was having sex onstage. —But he was tame compared to what they're doing now."

Sexual revolution

"He planted the seeds of the sexual revolution of the '60s."

"Elvis was good—but, when he was bad, he was even better!"

"People are still trying to be what he was."

"We all have something of Elvis in us."

"Even Michael Jackson was inspired by Elvis. Even Justin Timberlake! Every generation reinvents Elvis in its own way."

"He was the first to show America what TV could do. He made it a phenomenon, he used it to shock and revolutionize the entertainment scene. He was the perfect TV star!"

"He created the template for the celebrity rock star."

"He changed the way people viewed entertainment."

"The thing we loved most about him was his abandonment. But he lost much of it when he went to Hollywood.

"Elvis broke down the walls between whites and blacks."

"He wasn't black, but his music wasn't white, either. That's why many blacks identified with him.

"He mixed black and white culture."

"He triggered the emotional revolution of white America.

"Elvis changed the entertainment world's center of gravity!"

"He left an unbelievable legacy. He made racism moot and academic. He crossed all barriers, joined everyone together!"

Dissenting voices

There *were* a few dissenting voices, but they were generally drowned out by the cacophony of praise. Still, for the record, this is what they said:

"He *wasn't* the King of Rock. He stole his music from black singers."

"He was a bad influence on young people."

"Critics kept blasting Elvis—but he was big business."

"He didn't know how to handle fame and fortune, and drowned himself in sex, drugs and food."

The last word, however, is once again positive: "He made Ed Sullivan sweat when he guested on his show, but he got the biggest viewership." "He had soul, and that appealed to black listeners." And: "He was the Eminem of his time, the white artist who did black material better than the blacks themselves!"

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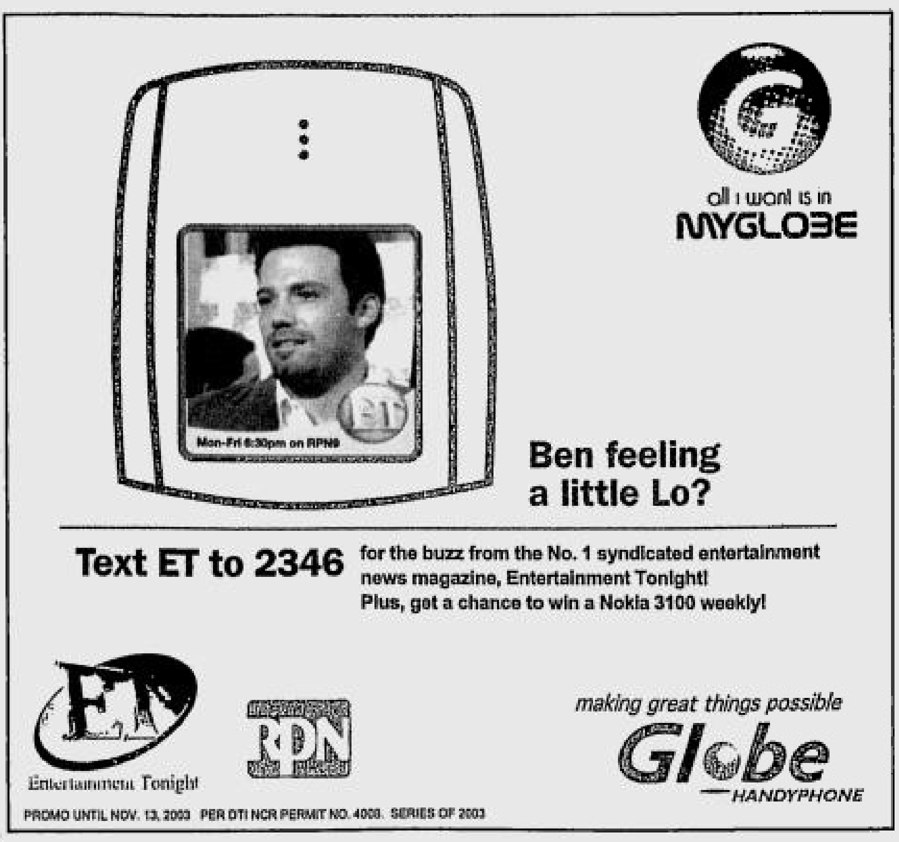

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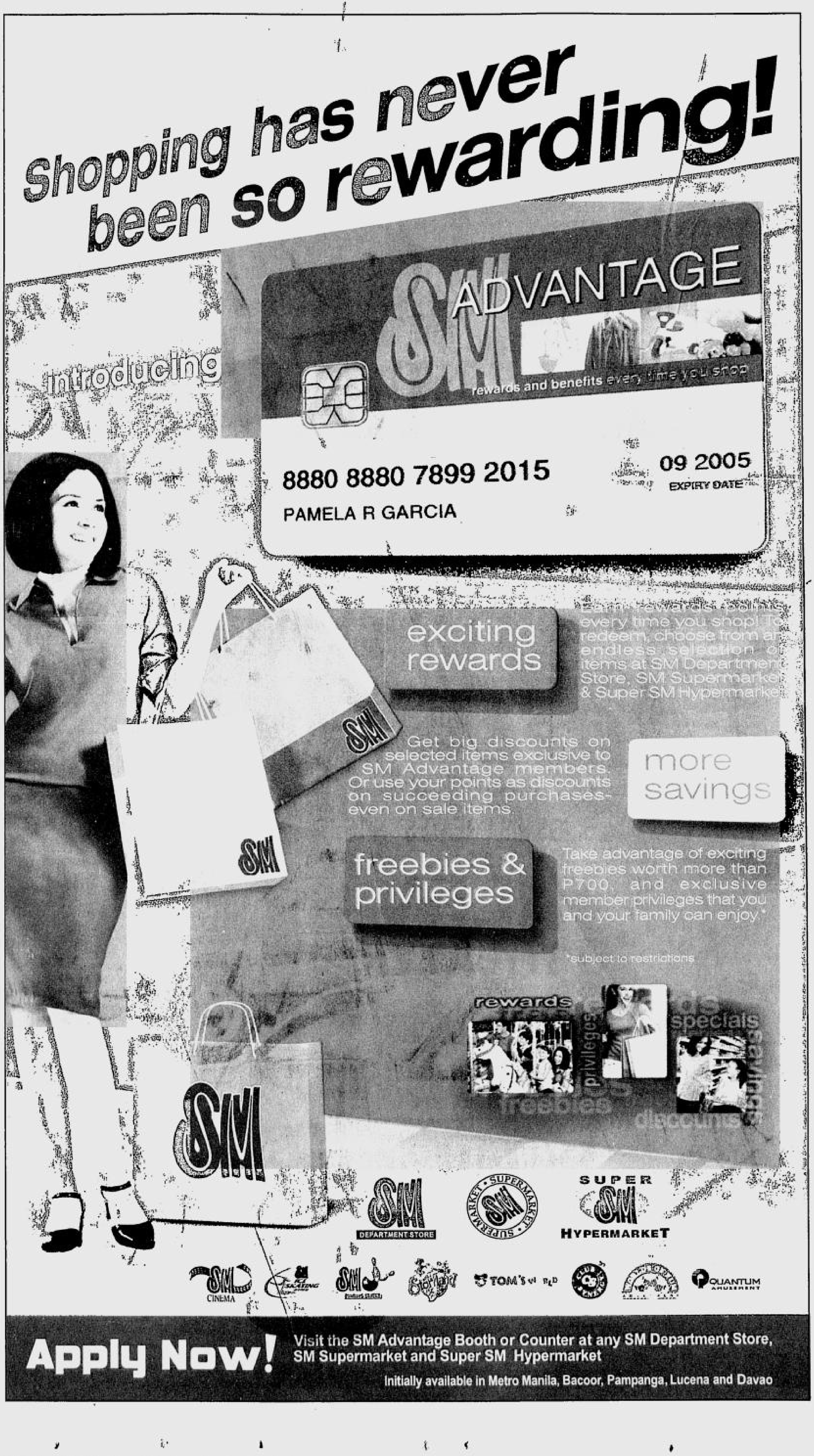

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Heady moviegoing experience in Singapore

By Rito P. Asilo

IF there's one thing we love more than the theater, it's the movies and their undeniable power to sweep us off our feet with tales of love and loss, as well as their never-ending depiction of the resiliency of the human spirit and its ability to hurdle great odds.

Pirate-free video shops

On our recent theater-related trip to Singapore, we spent some of our free time scouring its countless pirate-free video shops, and finding cineplexes that featured titles that could never reach Philippine shores.

In one mall alone, we caught screenings of films from Thailand (Prachya Pinkew's "Ong-Bak"), the United States (The Coen Brothers' "Intolerable Cruelty"), France (Cedric Clapisch's "The Spanish Apartment") and, of course, Singapore (Royston Tan's "15").

As a self-confessed movie buff (we even have a copy of William A. Wellman's 1927 silent film, "Wings," starring,the controversial Clara Bow, on video, the very first film honored with a Best Picture Oscar in 1928), we grabbed at the chance to watch contemporary Asian and European features.

It was a heady experience, but it also served as a sad realization that a lot of these countries' movie industries have indeed eclipsed us in quality, scope and influence. Even poverty-stricken Bangladesh has managed to win accolades at Cannes with Tareque Masud's Fipresci-winner, "The Clay Birds."

Screenings of entries

During our working visit, we managed to squeeze in screenings of entries, among them Jean-Pierre Limosin's "Novo" and Etienne Chatiliez's "Tanguy," at the 19th Singapore French Film Festival, courtesy of Alliance Francaise.

"TANGUY." Entry to the 19th French Film Festival in Singapore.

TONY Ja. Lead star of Thailand's box-office blockbuster, "Ong-Bak."

We were even more delighted to find a rich selection of titles in video shops, in DVD, VCD and VHS formats, although they're a bit expensive (but then again, most everything in Singapore is pricey).

Among the titles we brought back from the Lion City were: Majid Majidi's "The Children of Heaven" and "The Color of Paradise" (Iran); Bahman Ghobadi's "A Time for Drunken Horses (Iran); Glen Goei's "Forever Fever" (Singapore); Wisit Sasanatieng's Thai western, "Tears of the Black Spider"; Choi Ho's "Who Are You?" (South Korea); Olivier Assayas' "Sentimental Destinies" (France), and the controversial Palestinian film by Elia Suleiman, "Divine Intervention," which allegedly didn't make it to the Oscars because of its country's political woes. Apparently, they didn't know to which country it belonged—Israel or Palestine.

Classics

We even found copies of classics or personal favorites we couldn't find in London (William Wyler's "Roman Holiday," Frank Capra's "It Happened One Night" and Jeannot Szwarc's "Supergirl"). A number of titles, specifically the eastern European features we got for our collection, weren't even familiar, but when we checked them out, they were great films directed by some of the biggest names in world cinema.

Everyone complains about the state of moviemaking in the Philippines. But if we can't learn from our mistakes, perhaps our producers should learn from these movies, and see how other countries have gotten their act together to come up with features that are both memorable and worth watching.

Dramatized documentary about Adolf Hitler's life

By Noelani Torre

ADOLF Hitler is one of the most infamous figures in world history. Everybody knows who he is, even if only vaguely, as over the past half-century his name has become synonymous with genocide, war, and evil.

Impression

This is an impression that Cinemax's new feature, "Hitler: The Rise of Evil," doesn't try to correct, as its title indicates. What it tries to do is to give us a more concrete picture of this enigmatic man, who was responsible for committing some of modern history's worst crimes against humanity. (The phrase "crime against humanity" itself was in fact coined during the trials of Hitler's underlings at Nuremberg.)

We were recently able to watch Part One of "Hitler," which details his early years, his stint in the army during World War I, and his establishment of the Party of Nationalist Socialists—a group that the world would know a decade after its inception as simply the Nazis.

The idea of a dramatized documentary about Hitler's life is something we find interesting, mainly because we haven't seen any other such production before. All the big and small World War II films we've viewed told the story from the soldiers' or the victims' points of view.

Reason

Rarely has the bad guy's story been told, for the simple reason that it would most probably be horrid to watch.

In "Hitler," however, we don't just get to see the bad guy doing bad things, we also see how it became possible for him to do all that he eventually did.

"Hitler" unreels in the context of post-World War I Germany, where the destruction of the old Kaiser-led regime and the rise of socialism (Marx was a German, after all) made for a distinctively volatile sociopolitical brew.

"Hitler" begins with scenes of Hitler's early years at home and at school. They go by too quickly for us, however, amounting to nothing more than snapshots. We're not sure whether this was because there is a dearth of information concerning his childhood. We would have appreciated a more detailed re-telling.

Nevertheless, there were several interesting biographical tidbits revealed, such as Hitler's—they called him Addie, a deceptively mild nickname—strong attachment to his mother. It was also revealed that his father was at the same time his mother's uncle (thus laying to rest those bizarre rumors that Jose Rizal fathered Adolf Hitler during his sojourn in Germany!).

Also, Addie at 10 was fond of burning his father's beehives. This roasting of helpless insects later developed into his diabolical concentration camp gas chambers...

ROBERT Carlyle plays the infamous German leader.

Another interesting fact is that Hitler was a frustrated artist. His mother apparently encouraged him in his painting, but Addie proved to be all technique and no fire. He couldn't pass the auditions to get into the academies, and he soon left home to lead a rudderless poorhouse existence.

Would-be artist

That's another thing we would have liked to see—Hitler's attempts at art-making—if, that is, there are still some of his artworks left. The would-be artist was fond of destroying things when he was in a rage.

Robert Carlyle plays the grown-up Adolf Hitler, and his performance as the constantly half-cocked little lunatic is quite impressive. Hitler in the trenches of World War I is already a complete nut, through he is able to hide it most of the time—except when railing against the communists and the Jews, whom he blames for the country's destabilization.

There is also a chillingly revealing little scene with his dog, who, while running away from its master after a beating, inadvertently leads Hitler to safety.

Scapegoats

The rest of the feature tells how he made scapegoats of the communists and the Jews, inflaming restless malcontents in the beer halls of Munich into a fever pitch of hatred. As his movement becomes bigger, and as the rich and powerful find in him the means to become even richer and more powerful, we see how a lunatic like Hitler was able to eventually take control of his country—he had a great deal of help, and too few cared to oppose him, too late.

What "Hitler: The Rise of Evil" shows us is that Hitler alone wasn't responsible for all the atrocities eventually committed. In the words of the German journalist played by Matthew Modine, who was the proverbial voice in the wilderness, "The worst we can do, the absolute worst, is to do nothing." Which is exactly what most Germans did.

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New DVD includes heretofore unseen footage of John Lennon

By Jill Lawless

LONDON—Yoko Ono says compiling a new DVD of her late husband John Lennon's solo work was one of the hardest jobs she's ever had to do.

The disc, "Lennon Legend," features 20 of the murdered Beatle's songs, illustrated with a mix of restored promo clips, new animation and heretofore unseen footage of the couple in public and in private.

Very hard

"It was very hard for me to work on this, because there was footage that reminded me of my life with John," Ono told the audience at a preview screening in London. "Sometimes it made me feel less professional about it, and I wondered if I could go through with it."

As executive producer of the disc, Ono, 70, helped comb through video tapes, home movies and newsreels for footage of the couple in performance, at home in New York City and at the beach.

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'THE HUMAN body,' Morpheus tells Neo in the first of the Matrix movies, "generates more bio-electricity than a 120-volt battery and over 25,000 BTU's of body heat…The Matrix is a computer generated dream world built to keep us under control in order to change a human being into this. (Morpheus shows a battery)"

Science fiction just became reality - a team of Japanese scientists headed by Dr. Kazuo Eda invented a device that produces electricity from blood. The device draws power from blood sugar, mimicking the way the body generates energy from food. Theoretically, it could allow a person to pump out 100 watts - enough electricity to illuminate a light bulb.

Just imagine an organic machine that runs on food and energy vitamins instead of oil and gas and voila, you've just grasped the concept of bio-electricity or energy produced by the human body. There may not be enough energy in your body to make you a future alternative to fossil fuels (that's a relief), but have you ever wondered where the energy produced in the body comes from?

The basic unit of energy is calories. True to the concept of an organic machine, the body needs a specific amount of food to meet its daily energy or caloric requirements.

Besides food, the body also needs "energy vitamins" such as Vitamin C and B-complex. The synergy of Vitamin C and B-complex is needed in the breakdown of chemicals absorbed from food (proteins, carbohydrates and fats) into energy utilized by the cells to support processes vital for life.

The average professional office worker needs about 1,900 to 2,570 Kilocalories (Kcal) of energy per day to sustain his daily activities. In comparison, athletes (including the physically-active, "after-office" athlete) need a higher caloric requirement of 3,000 Kcal per day.

Unlike the professional office worker, athletes need high levels of energy daily to sustain intense physical activity during training. High energy is vital in reaching a high level of performance in popular sports such as basketball, badminton or cycling.

To improve their competitive edge, athletes should strictly adhere to one of the major factors of sports science - specialized training coupled with a high-calorie diet and multivitamins, such as ENERVON, to boost their energy.

ENERVON has the highest levels of "Energy Vitamins" (Vitamins C and B-complex) for maximum release of energy to give athletes and the physically-active yuppie the competitive edge needed for peak performance in sports.

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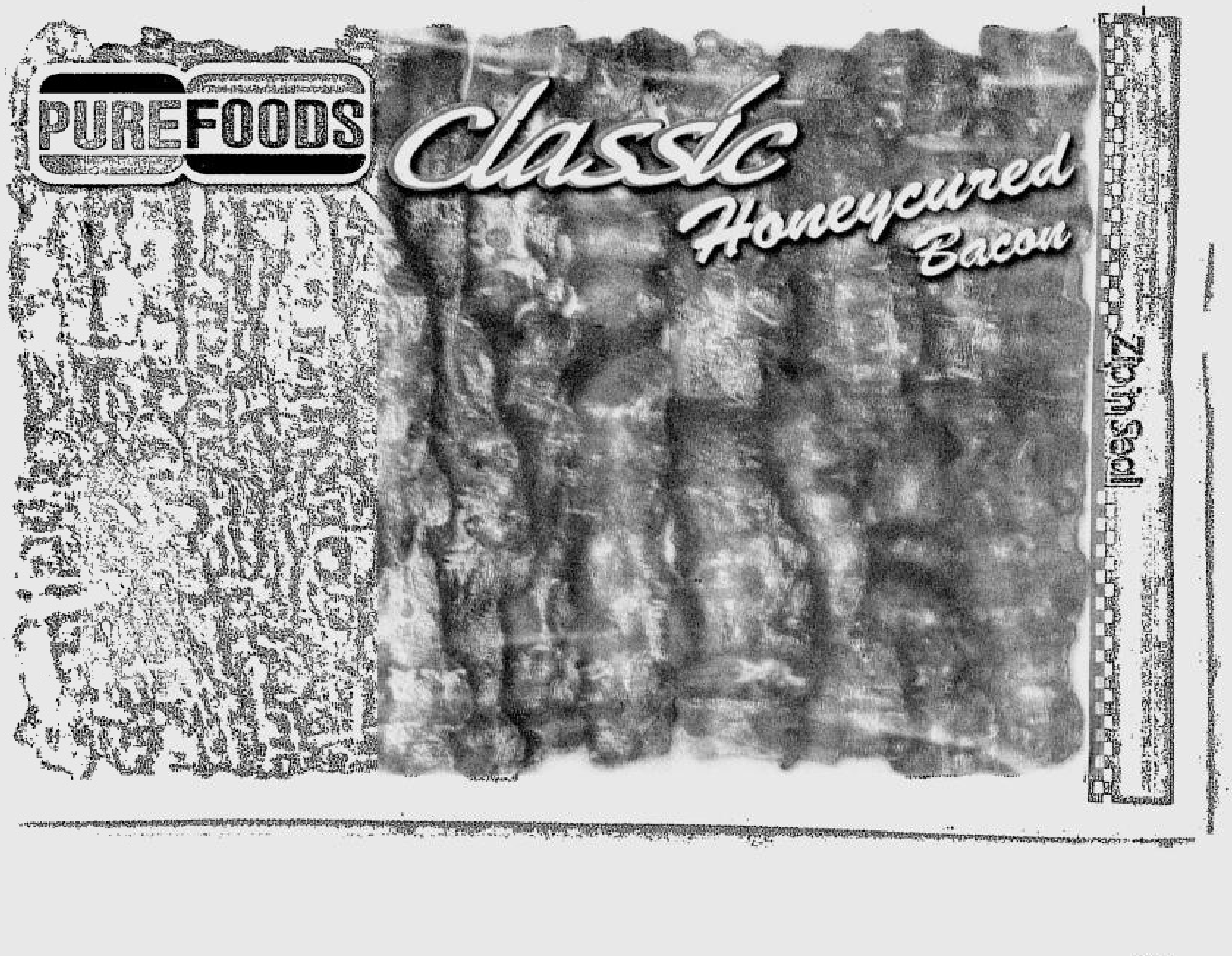

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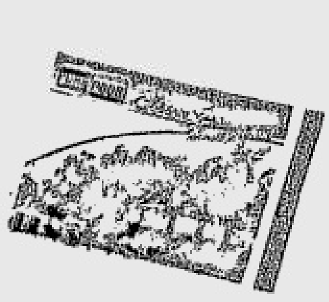

Norah Jones, Ravi Shankar object to Indian film about their lives

BOMBAY, India—The lead characters in a Bollywood script: a world renowned Indian sitar composer and his long-lost daughter, an American jazz singer. The finale: the daughter sweeps the Grammy music awards and they reunite.

Sound familiar?

JONES. Calls the movie potentially exploitative.

Musician

Both India's best known musician, sitar master Ravi Shankar, and his daughter Norah Jones think so. And they don't like it.

The film's script echoes their story—which came out after Jones and her CD "Come Away with Me" scored at the Grammys—and Shankar's wife, Sukanya, says the whole family is opposed to the production of the movie, "Song of Life," by veteran Bollywood actor Dev Anand.

The criticism has not deterred Anand, 79, currently in New York to cast American and Indian actors for the movie.

The actors will speak English, not Hindi. The movie will feature four songs, and no bump and grind dances typical of Bollywood, India's 800-film-per-year industry based in Bombay, also known as Mumbai.

Anand, who has directed 16 movies over the last three decades, recalls being in New York in February when he heard Jones was nominated for a string of Grammys.

"The next day it was in the news that Norah Jones had won five Grammys, and she happened to be the daughter of Ravi Shankar," he says. He said the Grammy awards were "a take-off point, it triggered off something."

Script

The Shankars and Jones say everyone in the family is angry about the script, which focuses on the American singer and her mother—who Anand says was "deserted" by the Indian musician.

"Nobody knows the inside story about our family except us, really. It's nobody's business and intrudes on our privacy," an upset Sukanya Shankar said from London, where she was accompanying her husband and daughter on tour in Europe.

Ravi Shankar, 82, a three-time Grammy winner, has been well-known in the West for decades because of his influence on the Beatles.

Sweeping success

But Jones' sweeping success focused unwanted attention on Shankar's estranged relationship with Norah's mother, New York concert producer Sue Jones, whom he never married.

Norah Jones was born in New York and raised in Texas. For 10 years, she had no contact with her father, but the two have since made peace. "I'm over everything, I don't resent him," Jones said.

Anand, who will play the Indian musician in the movie, insists the film will not harm Jones and the Shankar family. *AP*

Italian comedian-acrobat stars in cruise ship's nightly show

By Bibsy Carballo

UBER. Descended from four generations of acrobatic comedians from Italy.

IF there is any activity other than eating that always packs a full house on a cruise these days, it is the nightly entertainment in its big theaters. On the Golden Princess-Continental Airlines' seven-night tour of New England and Canada, the star of the evening is easily a diminutive Italian skinhead by the name of Uber Rossi.

Four generations

Uber, 34, descends from four generations of acrobatic comedians from Lake Como in North Italy near Milan. His father, Dominique Macaggi (Rossi is his mother's family name), taught him everything he knows, and his wise sayings intermittently cropped up in our conversation. Uber's father told him, "In life, if you don't laugh, you die."

Uber remembers his father putting on shows in the family's barn, with the audience sharing the fun with the animals.

At age 8, his father brought him to Las Vegas for four years. His grandfather founded the Comedia del Arte, an acrobatic school in his hometown.

Uber, married to a Spanish-German dancer, is already teaching his 20-month-old male twins to get into the act, and continue the lineage.

Precious

He has been with Princess Cruises for eight years, and the association is precious to him. It was here where he met and married his wife.

On the cruise ship, Uber appears in a new stand-up comedy act with singer Tony Cherry, but it is in "Lights, Camera, Action" that he shines brightest, despite his having to share the stage with the entire Princess company.

"I love the challenge of doing choreographed comedy because it's hard to pull off," he exclaims. People who have seen his shows several times swear that no performance is ever the same with Uber. There is a lot of adlibbing and improvisation, and that, Uber says, is what he loves most.

Offers

That is also the reason why he knows he won't be happy doing Broadway musicals. "I've had offers, but I know they're not for me. I have to be free to reinvent my roles. I would be bored doing the same thing night after night!"

His dream is to eventually open his own intimate 200-seat theater in Las Vegas, develop his own material, and like his family before him, teach fledging comedians the tricks of the trade.

Email the author at bibsymcar@yahoo.com

Jon-Jon is on the road to recovery

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THIS may confound physicians from the First World who have always considered Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis, or SSPE, not only a lifetime disease but a fatal one as well. On Aug. 2, 2001, I wrote a story about Juanito Gutierrez Jr. or Jon-Jon, who was severely afflicted with the effects of SSPE.

He was lying helplessly in bed, reduced mostly to skin and bones. SSPE is a late complication of measles, a seemingly simple childhood disease that is preventable through vaccination.

Deluge of gifts

What followed was a deluge of cash and gifts from good Samaritans, including precious vials of intravenous immunoglobulin or IVIG solution. The vials were sold at a discounted price by Vizcarra Pharmaceutical, owned by Victoria Vizcarra Amalingan.

We welcome financial donations through the SSPE Children Care Foundation, Current Account 0291-0369-96 and Dollar Savings Account 0294-0271-49, both at the BPI Forbes Park branch, or e-mail at sspefdn@yahoo.com or call 522-1905 or 522-5189.

Other cases have since surfaced, encouraged by the publicity we gave the boy. We have established the SSPE Children Care Foundation to help more children. From the very start, we have been referring our cases to Dr. Aida Mendoza-Salonga and Dr. Bernadette Chua.

Assistance

Two years later, Jon-Jon is well on the road to recovery. He is able to walk, sit and smile, and can now appreciate his surroundings again. There are more children awaiting assistance.

Untreated, SSPE can lead to death. First, the patient undergoes stupor and severe, uncontrolled fits of trembling, progressing to dementia, central blindness, rigidity, and then, death. Incubation period is seven years while the virus lives in the body. It attacks mostly male children.

We manage SSPE Children Care Foundation Inc. with Belinda Olivares-Cunanan, who acts as the foundation's treasurer.

JON-JON before (left) and after the start of treatments.

Photoworkshop

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Serving the right master

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA says that there are two types of people in this world: The first is a servant of the mind, while the second is a servant of the Supreme Being.

A servant of the mind is not only influenced and controlled by the thoughts created by the mind, but also by the feelings and sentiments coming from the mind. Thus, people often say, "Oh, I know exercise is good but I don't feel like doing it." The mind is in control.

Even romantic "love" makes a person engage in irrational activities. The feeling of falling in love controls a person so much that he loses sight of reality and the truth. He feels jealous and anxious. In reality, the person is controlled by lust, not by real love.

Vacation

Of course, even feelings of romantic love eventually ebb. People try to revive it by taking a vacation together, but it's gone.

We don't realize that the problem is not the imperfect partner, but the mind that is dragging us from one emotional ride to another. People go through a string of relationships because they are overwhelmed by the passing feelings of newly-found romantic love put forth by the mind.

A servant of the mind ends up emotionally stressed, battered and frustrated. In his life, there may be high points and exciting feelings like in a roller-coaster ride, but it is eventually empty.

Scriptures

On the other hand, the servant of the Supreme Being takes direction from his Master, who is most loving and kind. The servant of God receives knowledge from scriptures.

He is not carried away by passing sentiments or thoughts proposed by the mind. He is not a follower of fads or idols. Rather, his object of devotion and service is the Supremely Lovable Being. And he truly cares for God's children.

Let us all make the wise decision of serving someone who truly cares for us.

Email lotuspond108@hotmail.com

New DVD includes . . .

From page D3

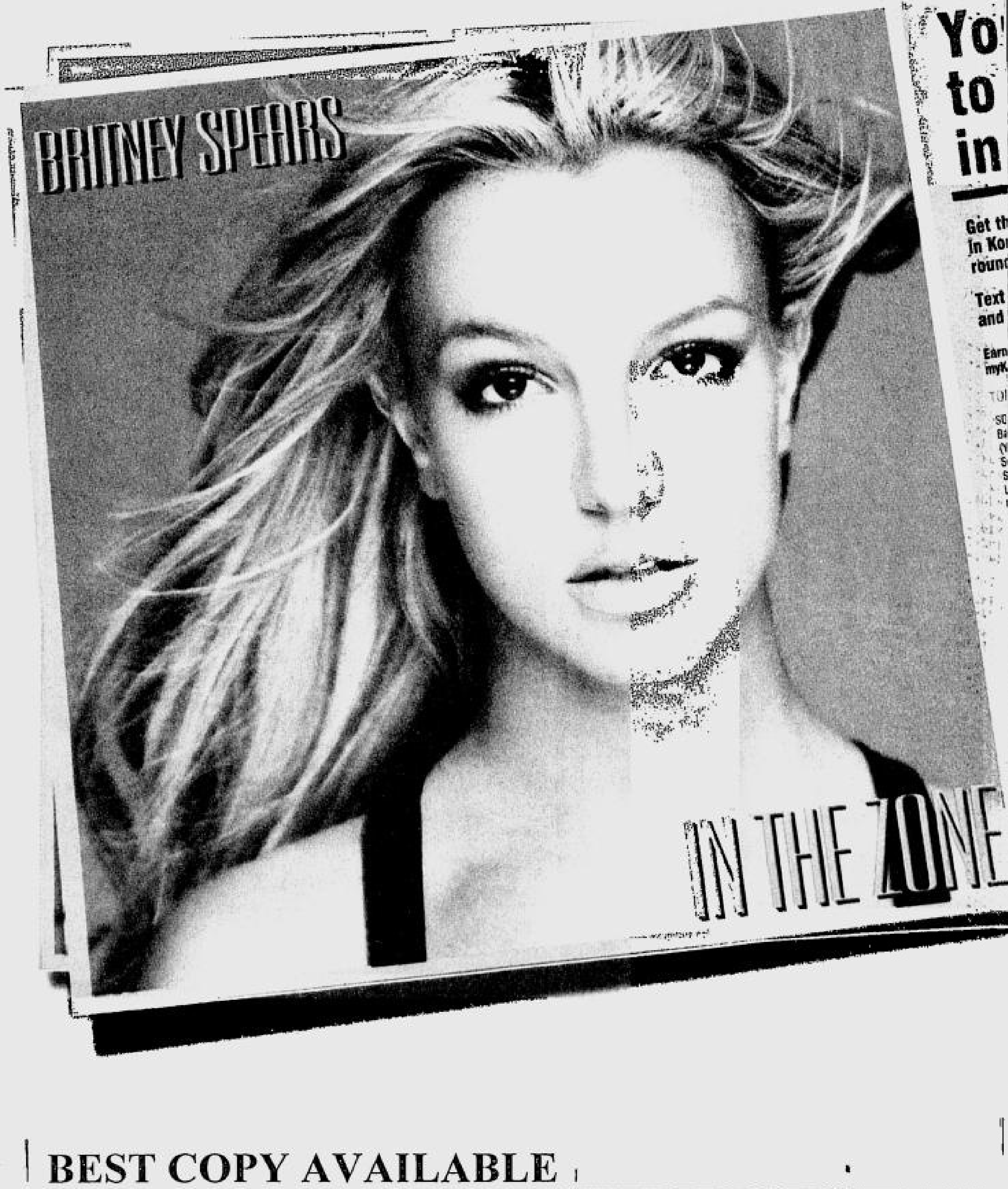
Ono is ever-present in the footage, much of it showing tender moments between the pair. The Japanese-born artist, who married Lennon in 1969 as The Beatles were disintegrating, dominated the last decade of his life—to the chagrin of many Beatles fans.

At his side

She was at his side for the 1969 "Bed-In" for peace, marched with him against the Vietnam War and performed with him in the Plastic Ono Band.

Since Lennon's murder by deranged fan Mark David Chapman on Dec. 8, 1980, Ono has been a dedicated guardian of the musician's legacy.

"Lennon Legend," companion to a 1998 album of the same name, includes footage of the "Bed-In" and Lennon performing "Imagine" in his last live performance, at a London concert in 1975. *AP*



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Gospel music heals all wounds

By Sheila Norman-Culp

GOODING AND KNOWLES. Team-up to unite a quarreling congregation in "The Fighting Temptations."

NEW YORK—Gospel heals all wounds as two of the most photogenic stars on the planet—Cuba Gooding Jr. and Beyonce Knowles—unite a quarreling Georgia congregation in the infectious romantic comedy "The Fighting Temptations."

Everlasting crutch

The music resuscitates a plot of pure hokum based on the everlasting crutch of "We gotta put on a show." And it soothes the irritation of Beyonce's slightly wooden performance and Cuba's tendency to overdo any role to the 10th degree.

Never mind all that. This is a bellyaching, foot-stomping, hoot-and-hollering movie for any crowd.

First, director Jonathan Lynn ("The Whole Nine Yards," "My Cousin Vinny") never forgets that it's a comedy. And who's funnier than God's flawed followers—those self-righteous Christian folk who live at the church but spend their days worshipping the seven deadly sins?

No one—except maybe the sinners who never get near a church.

Secondly, "The Fighting Temptations" has an all-star musical lineup of R&B, gospel and hip-hop artists that no audience can resist, including Faith Evans, Melba Moore, Shirley Caesar and dozens of others.

Brilliant ideas

Gooding is Darrin Hill, an up-and-coming, hustling ad exec determined to soar up that New York corporate ladder. But his brilliant ideas are hobbled by a chronic inability to tell the truth, and he soon violates the 11th Commandment—"Thou shalt not get caught."

"We cannot be represented by people who tell lies," blusters his pompous boss (Dakin Matthews).

"But we are in advertising!" Darrin replies.

As mountains of credit card debt build up, Darrin escapes by attending his Aunt Sally's funeral. A surprise comes with the will—Sally's dying wish is for Darrin to revive her church choir and win a regional gospel competition.

How perfect—especially since Darrin has told everyone in his hometown that he's a big-time music producer. Plus he won't get his inheritance without it.

In the time-honored tradition of the underdog, Darrin has to find people who can actually hold a note—single mother Lilly (Beyonce) and three talented convicts (rapper T-Bone, singer Montell Jordan and Chris Cole). He convinces them to unite as a team and take on the slick heavy hitters singing their hearts out for God.

Standing in his way is Paulina Pritchett (LaTanya Richardson), a jealous, power-hungry church treasurer who wants the coveted "gospel director" title for herself.

Cuba and Beyonce get plenty of help from their supporting cast. As the playboy Lucius, comedian Mike Epps has a roaringly funny riff on being a Southern booty-ologist that is still tame enough for kids to laugh at. Steve Harvey is deadpan hysterical as the town's stoned radio announcer.

Heavy drama

Wendell Pierce moves from the heavy drama of HBO's "The Wire" to the wry humor of the film's browbeaten Rev. Lewis.

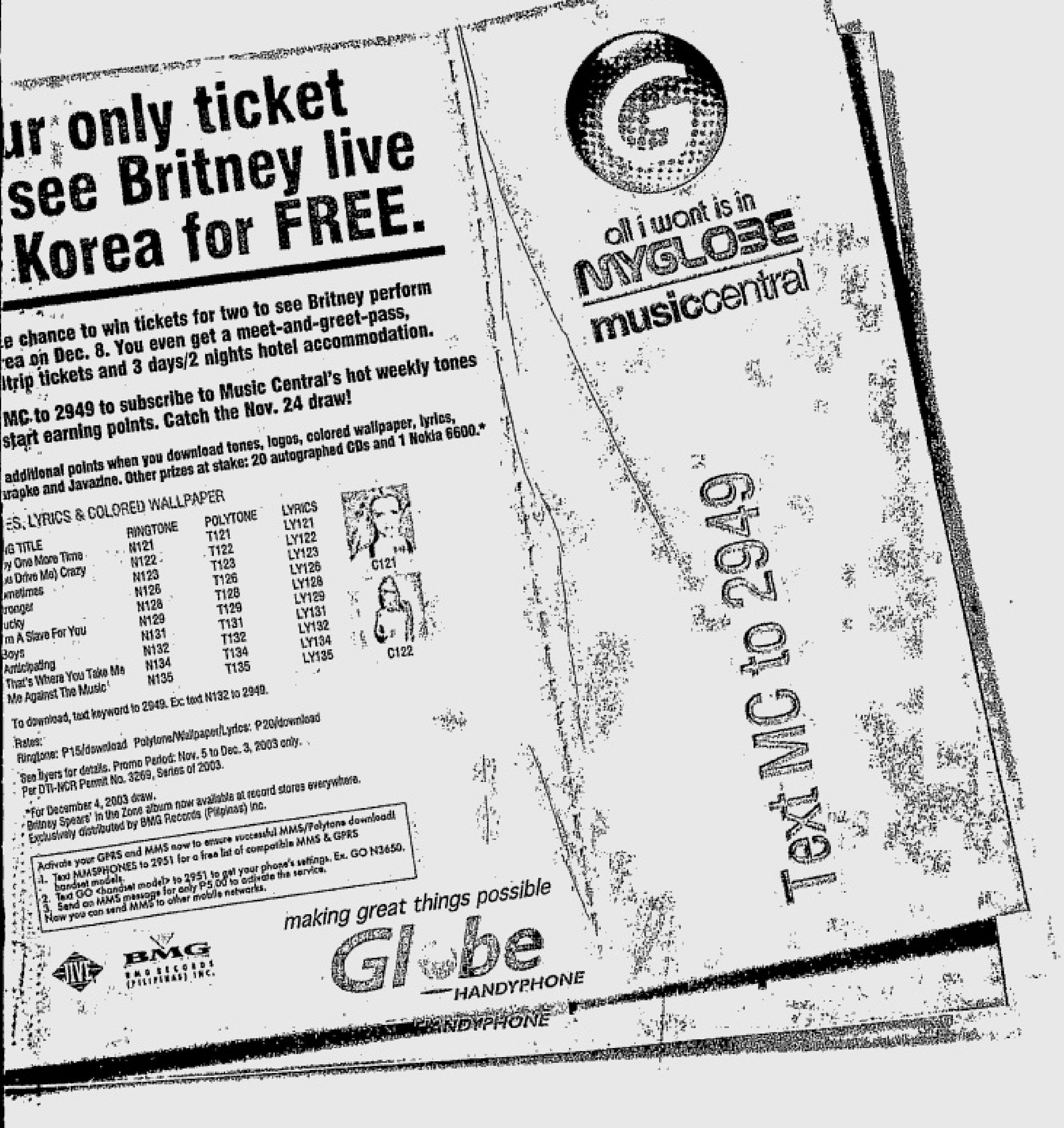
"Son, if that ain't Jesus calling, you better turn it off," he says when Darrin's cell phone rings during a service.

There's even a barbershop where haircuts are dished out in perfect harmony by R&B group The O'Jays.

Like a good gospel song, "The Fighting Temptations" works up into its rhythm, getting punchier as it goes on. Beyonce gets more relaxed with each song and Cuba even tones down the wattage every once in a while.

If their chemistry is a bit stiff, so what? They sure are gorgeous, and the music is great.

AP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Zen Buddhist shares 'four noble truths' for writers

By Ronald G. Mangubat

ZEN philosophy teaches that we learn more from our failures than from our successes. From this ancient tenet, writer, teacher, psychotherapist and Zen Buddhist Gail Sher introduces specific practices to be able to enhance the writing process.

Wisdom

In the book, "One Continuous Mistake: Four Noble Truths for Writers" (Penguin Books, Ltd., 1999 204 pp.), Sher combines the wisdom of great writers and the classic Zen teachings in order to develop a daily writing practice.

The four noble truths, according to Sher, are the following: 1) Writers write; 2) Writing is a process; 3) You don't know what your writing will be until the end of the process; 4) If writing is your practice, the only way to fail is not to write.

Sher further elaborates by saying that one can never really know what writing is until he experiences it, and that if one is determined to tread on the writing path, one must be able to acquire a write-or-die attitude. "Writers write," she says, "If you can't get to the paper, writing won't occur."

Attendance to the craft

This is why it is important to develop habits and to emphasize a religious daily attendance to the craft. A habit, according to Sher, is the link between inspiration and realization, and ultimately becomes a potent tool in the writing process.

The process is anchored on its five pillars, which are composed of brainstorming, journaling, writing of the skeleton or draft, enriching or refining, and rest periods, which allow the work to ripen and achieve clarity.

Unlike most writing teachers who believe in inspiration, writer's block and constant praise, Sher says she does not adhere to any of that. She says if people use inspiration as a criterion for writing, one is likely to seek more of that and reject the concept of regular writing periods.

"If you can only write when the spirit moves you, you can hardly expect the spirit to move you on demand."

Writer's block, or what others call writer's anorexia, does not really exist, according to the Zen Buddhist.

Rather, there are various forms of distractions that impede the creative process. She, therefore, reminds her readers that every distraction can be turned into an opportunity to intensify or sharpen their writing practice.

Mediocre work

On the other hand, constant praises, especially for a beginning writer, could result in mediocre work rather than outstanding ones. "If a beginning writer is riveted on the praise and attention she will receive, her writing will lack the quality that would bring her the acceptance she needs."

However, she encourages all writers to have mentors or "writing parents." This helps the writer form his poetic voice and will honestly validate his work according to its merits.

The discipline of meditation is similar to writing, says Sher. An artist uses it to explores the natural rhythm of his expression. Both activities require silence, which fosters immediacy in language.

The richness of stories is more often than not drawn from daily experiences and the closer they are to reality, the sharper the material becomes.

A writer need not ponder on great thoughts or wait for sparks of brilliance in order to write. Even stay-at-home days with practically nothing to do could be productive for a writer.

Random thoughts

That's why she advises writers to carry notebooks, post-it notes, index cards or dictaphones in order to record their random thoughts. No matter how silly or ordinary they may seem, they could gestate and turn into something big.

Another tip is to experiment with writing at times when one ordinarily wouldn't. They include the moment when we wake up, in the middle of the night, when we are in a moving vehicle, while bathing, etc.

The book is full of writing exercises: it offers diagnostic exams in analyzing one's reading and learning personalities, guidelines

ZEN/ D6

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Generally good singers in 'Star in a Million'

By Noelani Torre

ABS-CBN Channel 2 is certainly not wasting time in catching up with the competition. Combining an amateur singing competition with touches of "reality TV," its newly upgraded "Star in a Million" seems to be the network's answer to both "Search for a Star" and "Star-Struck."

Only a portion

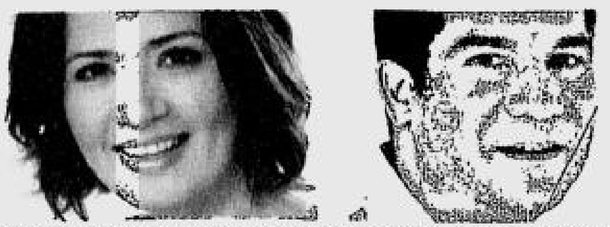
Once only a portion in the noontime variety show, "Asap Mania," "Star in a Million" now has its own Saturday, 6 p.m. timeslot—the same spot that GMA-7's "Search for a Star" occupies.

Obviously, Channel 2 is hoping to entice Saturday evening viewers to its camp, and it's ensuring this by stocking the show with audience-luring features like big-name hosts and "real" human drama and intrigue.

Like "Star-Struck," the show professes to go behind the scenes in order to show us what the star-making process is really like. Thus, we are subjected to schmaltzy scenes of the contestants getting teary-eyed and bemoaning the lack of support from their various loved ones. Practically all of them has a hard luck story to tell, magnified no doubt for the benefit of the camera.

There are also even more exasperating scenes of the *intrigas* going on among the contestants. So what if they're not very nice to each other or if they don't always get along? What do you expect?

Hosts Zsa Zsa Padilla and Edu Manzano are rather stiff and distant, especially the latter. It's not something you'd expect from people with their experience. Hosting, as they ought to know by now, is more than just standing in front of a camera and reading your lines.



PADILLA AND MANZANO. Host the network's answer to "Search for a Star" and "Star-Struck."

Behind the scenes

Ryan Agoncillo does the show's legwork—documenting the contestants' behind-the-scenes preparations (workshops, acting lessons, etc.), and generally making a nuisance of himself by fostering the *intrigahan* process.

The show also has three volunable judges (we don't know if they're going to be regulars), who speak up at the end of each of the contestants' song numbers to criticize, and to grade the performances. They try to be your archetypal severe (mean, even) jurors, but they can't quite pull it off. It just isn't in Filipinos' nature to be deliberately and volubly nasty.

We are a polite lot most of the time, and we prefer to let ourselves and others save face.

The judges are obviously uneasy with their harsh critic personas, and they mask this by latching on to less important details, like the singer's outfit or hairstyle, or by couching their snider comments in laughter.

Honest critiques

Still, we get more honest critiques from them than from the ultra-diplomatic judges of "Search for a Star," who keep repeating that everybody is so talented, it's unfortunate that we can only choose one winner, etc.

One good thing about "Star in a Million" is that its participant-filtering process is more efficient than that of "Search for a Star."

In the latter show, it's not uncommon to hear some cringe-worthy singing from time to time.

In the former all 10 contestants are generally good singers, though they aren't exempt from flaws, either. Enunciation appears to be the stumbling block of most—a significant number of contestants garbled their lyrics, and one, in particular, sounded as though he was short of breath from beginning to end.

Unlike "Search," "Star in a Million" doesn't have one set of contestants and one winner per telecast. Its format is more like "Star-Struck's—elimination. From 10 contestants, one is eliminated every week, and the final survivor will then be declared winner.

This format makes for a more tension-filled show, and things are bound to get more interesting as the contestants' numbers dwindle—if they do things right and don't get bogged down in the supposed "real" melodrama behind the scenes.

Indiana

From page D7

unflappable Bogart of "Casablanca."

The character originally was named Indiana Smith (Spielberg suggested changing it, while "Indiana" was the name of Lucas' dog, a joke that found its way into "Last Crusade").

Unavailable

Tom Selleck had been set to play the lead until his TV series, "Magnum, P.I." left him unavailable; before Ford was cast, others considered to play Indiana included Tim Matheson and Peter Coyote. Screen tests featured in the DVD set include Selleck as Indiana, with Sean Young in the role that went to Allen.

The filmmakers originally planned to pack it in after the third "Indiana Jones" flick, but Spielberg, Lucas and Ford now plan to shoot a fourth next year, with the film expected to hit theaters in 2005.

Faithful friend

John Rhys-Davies, who played Indy's faithful friend Sallah in "Raiders" and "Last Crusade," said he would love to reprise the role but has not heard if he will be invited back. The whole project hinges on the three principals, Rhys-Davies said.

Spielberg's wife, Capshaw, no doubt has some inside information, but she stayed mum about casting during a question-and-answer session last weekend with Allen and Doody to promote the DVD release.

In DVD interviews, Spielberg notes that while "Temple of Doom" is his least favorite of the "Indiana Jones" films, the movie did introduce him to Capshaw.

"Even though Indiana Jones ended up getting the girl," Spielberg says, "I really did." *AP*

Zen . . .

From page D5

for beginning writers of haiku, "watching the mind," and writing "*kinhin*," a form of walking meditation.

Toward the end of the book, the Zen Buddhist answers the question: What is the best way to write? "Each of us has to discover our own way of writing," she says, "Writing teaches writing. No one can tell you your own secret."

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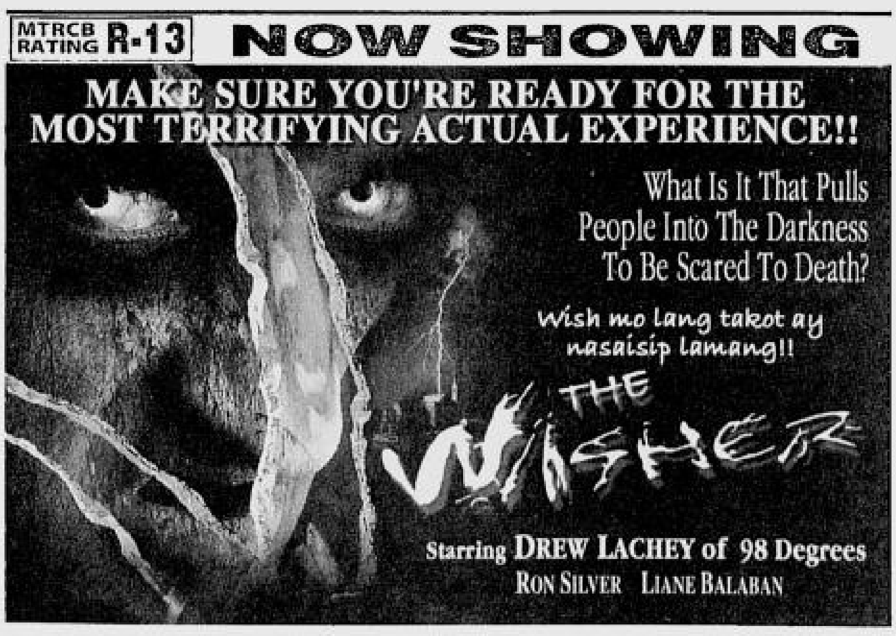

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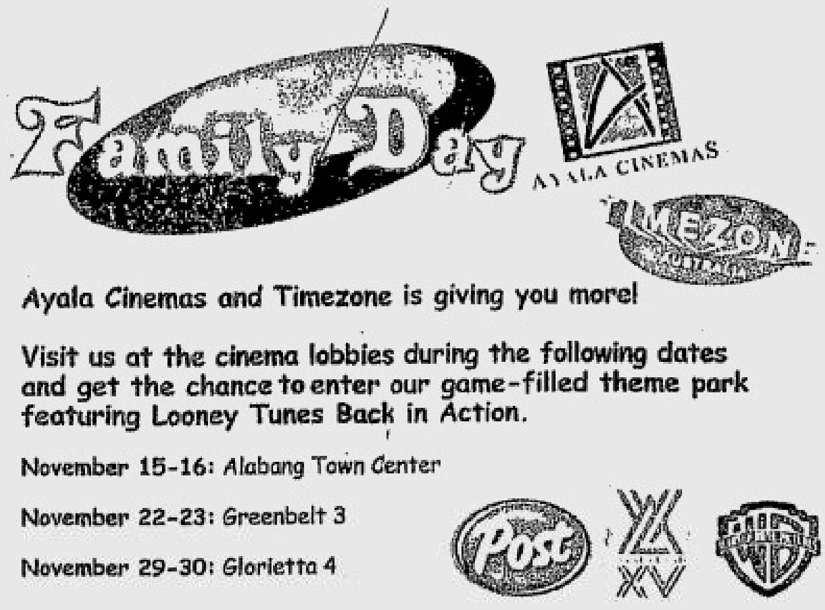

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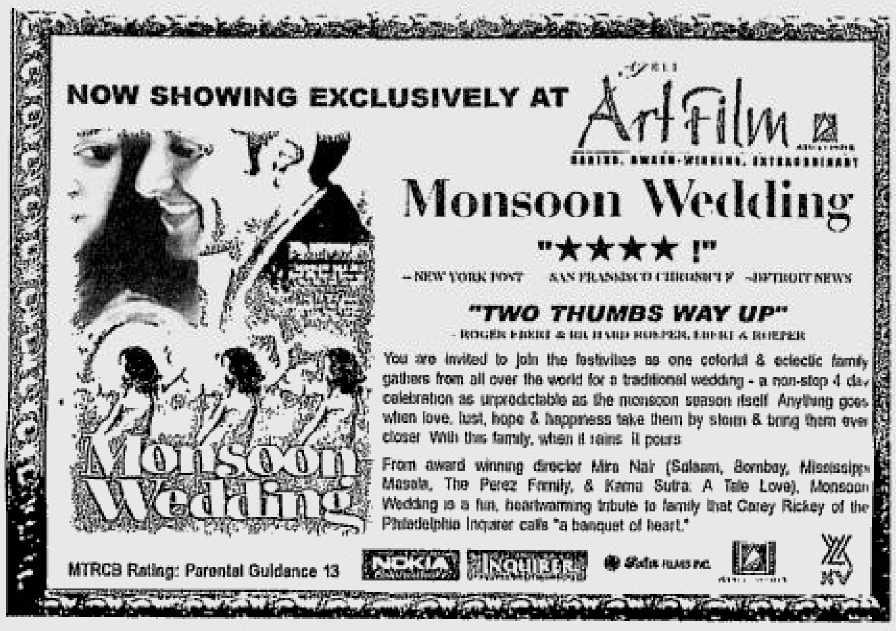

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"...a sweet expression of the better side of human nature..."
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"Oscar-quality performances are loud and clear in Radio."
– William Arnold, SEATTLE POST INTELLIGENCER

MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (GP)

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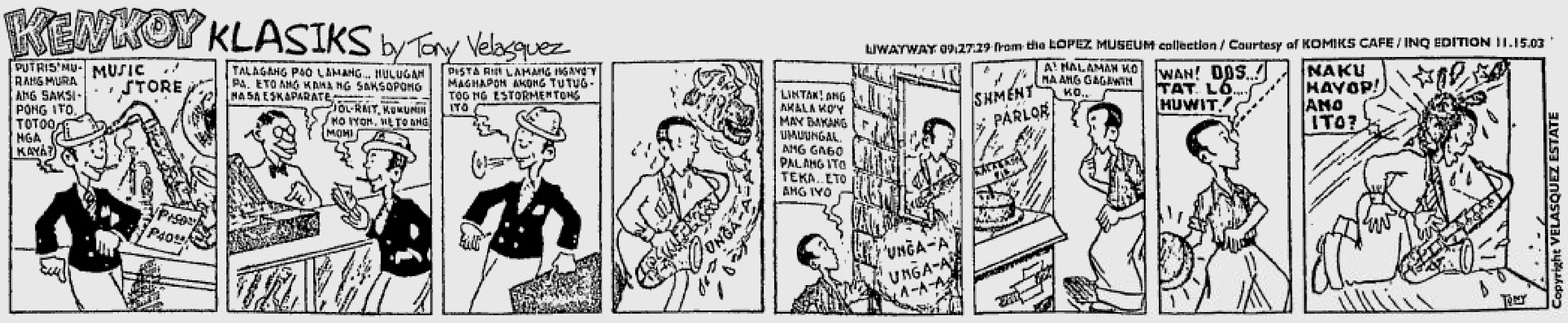
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Legal series needs to be more natural and empathetic

By Nestor U. Torre

LEGAL drama series used to be popular on TV, but they haven't been seen on the small screen for some seasons, except for imported shows like "The Practice."

Welcome development

Last month, however, a new local show about lawyers' public and private lives debuted on RPN-9, a welcome development that has added to the variety of formats we need to see on television, where every other show appears to be a giddy sitcom or weepy telenovela.

The new legal series, "May Puso ang Batas," is telecast on Channel 9 every Sunday at 8 p.m. It has a stellar cast headed by Gary Estrada as a brilliant young lawyer whose principles are constantly tested and challenged by the cunning and scheming wheeler-dealers in the legal system.

The show bears watching, especially when it tackles unusual cases, Last Oct. 26, for instance it dealt with a case of sexual harassment, with a twist: the accuser was a young man (Jao Mapa), and the person charged with harassing him was his lady boss (Evangeline Pascual).

Telling points

The case proceeded interestingly enough, and Mapa's character was able to make some telling points about a person's rights knowing no gender. But the episode was compromised by its resolution: When the case was decided in favor of the young man, there was no dramatic build-up and climax at all, just the judge's decision being read by a court clerk. How perfunctory can you get?

Also off-putting is the production's excessive gloss. The law offices are so coldly classy, and the legal firm's partners and lawyers are so uniformly well-dressed that they look removed from reality. Gloss is good, but people should still look and act like people.

The show's overly stylish look is complemented by a generally high-strung, melodramatic acting style that makes many of the performances in the program too arch and abstracted to be empathized with.

Some actors even perform, not with each other, but at the camera, a stylized form of performance that went out decades ago. Sure, villain characters are supposed to be so full of themselves that they don't care what other people think, but this "audience address" acting style is really too dated for words.

Showcase

The legal series' most unusual aspect is the fact that it's apparently been produced as a showcase for Sen. John Osmeña, who plays the big boss at the Juarez-Osorio Law Office. The senator is made to act in some scenes, and his lack of experience shows.

However, we can expect him to improve as the series goes on, so that isn't that big a deal. What does concern us is the show's being used partly as a platform for Osmeña's political views, as in the scene last Oct. 26 where he talked to the office janitor about the need to increase farmers' income by choosing high-value crops to plant.

Senator's insights

Impressed with the senator's insights, the janitor exclaimed, *"Ang katulad niyo ang dapat mamuno."* Message delivered, loud and clear!

Trouble is, it may be too clear. This sort of political-electoral thing works better if it's natural, subtle, subliminal. Semaphoring it like the program did could turn off some viewers.

On the whole, however, we're glad that "May Puso ang Batas" is on TV, because it answers a felt need for a legal drama series on local television. But let the acting and the political "message from our sponsor" come across more naturally, please.

ESTRADA. Plays a brilliant young lawyer in "May Puso ang Batas."

FORD (third from left) poses with co-stars Alison Doody, Kate Capshaw and Karen Allen.

'Indiana Jones' flicks on DVD

LOS ANGELES—Trust them: The makers of the "Indiana Jones" flicks were not about to let fans down with the long-awaited DVD release.

A close second to the original "Star Wars" trilogy on DVD-lovers' wish list, "The Adventures of Indiana Jones" debuted recently in a four-disc boxed set that includes one of the most comprehensive making-of documentaries ever.

Surprise

Hardcore fans who think they know it all about cinema's best-known archaeologist are in for a surprise, promises Jim Ward, vice president of marketing for Lucasfilm.

The team unearthed a huge range of behind-the-scenes footage for 1981's "Raiders of the Lost Ark," 1984's "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" and 1989's "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade." Among the material: Footage of star Harrison Ford practicing with Indy's whip; Lucas bouncing along the suspension bridge built for "Temple of Doom," and director Steven Spielberg pleading for more snakes in the "Raiders" tomb scene.

New interviews

The two-hour documentary mixes that footage with new interviews of Spielberg, Ford, Lucas, female co-stars Karen Allen, Kate Capshaw and Alison Doody and Sean Connery, who played Indy's father in "Last Crusade."

Lucas notes he dreamed up the idea that would become "Indiana Jones" in the 1970s but set it aside to do "Star Wars." The dashing archaeologist resurfaced when Lucas mentioned it to Spielberg on a Hawaii vacation the weekend "Star Wars" opened.

They viewed it as screwball-comedy master Preston Sturges meets "Casablanca" director Michael Curtiz. Spielberg notes that Indy was conceived as a flawed hero who owed as much to the unstable Humphrey Bogart of "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre" as to the

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7. Maaaring magpadala ng mga entries hanggang 12mn lang para sa game date na inyong sinasalihan.

8. Ang electronic raffle draw ay gaganapin mula Nov. 16 - 27 kasama ang DTI Representative sa ABS-CBN Interactive Office sa loob ng ABS-CBN Broadcast Center.

9. May isang lucky winner kada araw na mananalo ng dalawang (2) HAPPY 50 TV! THE CONCERT tickets worth P5,000 each! Texters can only win once for the whole duration of the promo.

Comedy Show	Entries sent on	Valid for raffle on the ff. dates	Announcement of Winners
Home Along Da Airport	Nov. 15, Sat	Nov. 16, Sun	W/in Ang Tanging Ina, Nov. 16
Ang Tanging Ina	Nov. 16, Sun	Nov. 17, Mon	W/in OK Fine Whatever, Nov. 17
Ok Fine Whatever!	Nov. 17, Mon	Nov. 18, Tue	W/in Bida si Mister Bida Si Misis, Nov 18
Bida si Mister Bida si Misis	Nov. 18, Tue	Nov. 19, Wed	W/in Whattamen & Klasmeyts, Nov. 19
Whatta Men	Nov. 19, Wed	Nov. 20, Thur	W/in Maalaala Mo Kaya, Nov. 20
Klasmeyts	Nov. 19, Wed	Nov. 20, Thur	W/in Maalaala Mo Kaya, Nov. 20
Home Along Da Airport	Nov. 22, Sat	Nov. 23, Sun	W/in Ang Tanging Ina, Nov. 23
Ang Tanging Ina	Nov. 23, Sun	Nov. 24, Mon	W/in OK Fine Whatever, Nov. 24
Ok Fine Whatever!	Nov. 24, Mon	Nov. 25, Tue	W/in Bida si Mister Bida si Misis, Nov. 25
Bida si Mister Bida si Misis	Nov. 25, Tue	Nov. 26, Wed	W/in Whattamen & Klasmeyts, Nov. 26
Whatta Men	Nov. 26, Wed	Nov. 27, Thur	W/in Maalaala Mo Kaya, Nov. 27
Klasmeyts	Nov. 26, Wed	Nov. 27, Thur	W/in Maalaala Mo Kaya, Nov. 27

10. Winners should claim their prizes on or before November 27. To claim, the winner must present his/her winning SIM card, a valid acknowledgement number and one (1) valid ID at ABS-CBN Interactive, 9th floor Eugenio Lopez Jr Communications Center Building cor. Mo. Ignacia Ave. & Eugenio Lopez Jr. St., South Triangle, Quezon City. Winners will also be informed via telephone call.

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RUFFALO. Played grown-up characters who refused to become men.

Mark Ruffalo grows up

LONDON—For a while, it looked as if Mark Ruffalo owned the patent on slacker-speak, playing grown-up characters who refused to become men.

As Warren, the Reagan-era pothead in Kenneth Lonergan's hit play, "This Is Our Youth," Ruffalo was sweet-faced yet damaged, the eternal kid trying to be cool. Ruffalo appeared in two separate off-Broadway runs of the play—in 1996 and 1998.

Breakout part

But it was Ruffalo's co-starring role in a Lonergan film, the sleeper 2000 hit, "You Can Count on Me," that was his breakout part.

As Terry Prescott, the nomadic brother to Laura Linney's single mom, Ruffalo made an indelible drifter—a boy-man hesitant with words and haunted by life.

Now 35, Ruffalo is a kid no more, as is clear from his performance as Malloy, the detective who romances Meg Ryan in the Jane Campion film, "In the Cut."

Was it nice at last to play a proper grown-up?

Malloy's a man, and I was dying to play a man. I am a man. I have a wife (Sunrise) and a (two-year-old) child. Several times, I've had people say to me, 'We're really surprised you speak so well; you're articulate.' They think I'm either Terry Prescott or Warren. But, I mean, I'm an actor.

Career

Between "This Is Our Youth" and "You Can Count on Me," do you feel as if you owe your career to Kenneth Lonergan?

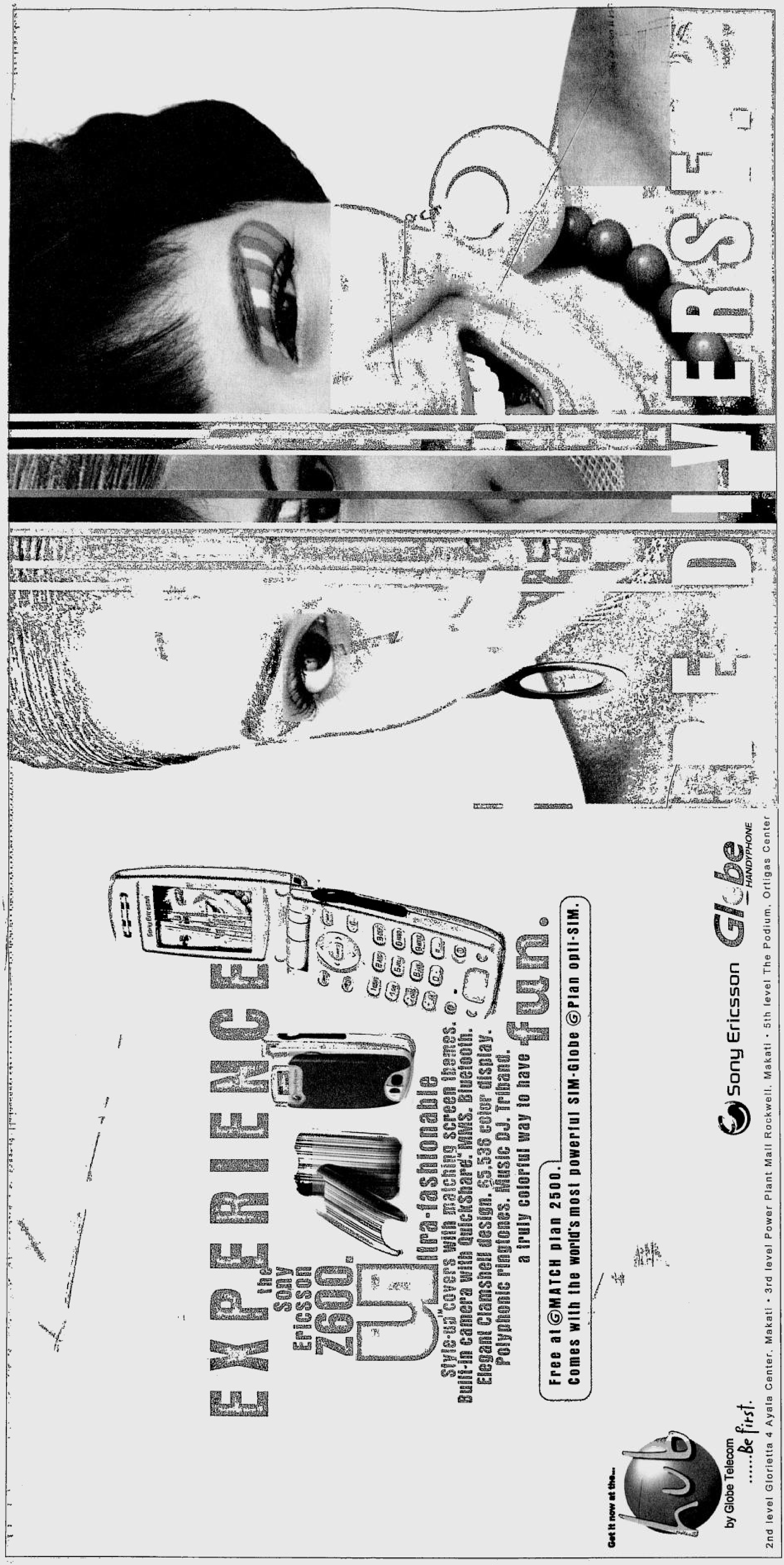
He has contributed in a very big way. I was lucky to run across Kenny after 15 years of slogging around in the lower depths of acting hell; finally, I was touched by an angel.

"In the Cut" is pretty in-your-face. Will people come see the movie?

I kinda feel like they might fall for it, in a weird way—like the 'Seven' audience: whoever went to see 'Seven' is going to go see this movie. And visually speaking, there's a whole narrative outside of the actual story that's so poetic.

You have two other films due out before Christmas—"My Life Without Me," with Sarah Polley, and Jim Carrey's "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind." Is it nice to achieve this degree of attention?

It's odd—blessings oftentimes come disguised as a curse. Before, I was impatient about it. But now I feel lucky that it's taken me so long. I know what I'm doing now! *AP*



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SATURDAY Special

Benicio Del Toro loves sexy tag

DEL TORO. Revels in his public role as heartthrob.

TORONTO—Academy Award-winning actor Benicio Del Toro revels in his public role as heartthrob.

Sexiest man alive

During a press conference to promote his film, "21 Grams," a female reporter gushed over his looks, calling him the "sexiest man alive" and failing to ask him any question.

This prompted the 36-year-old Puerto Rican-born actor to quip: "I love that question," as others in the conference room burst into laughter.

Drunken criminal

Del Toro, who won the best supporting actor Oscar for his performance in "Traffic" in 2000, plays Jack, a former drunken criminal who turns into a counselor for teenagers, in his latest film.

The film, opened to wide distribution yesterday.

The handsome praise for Del Toro and director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu prompted

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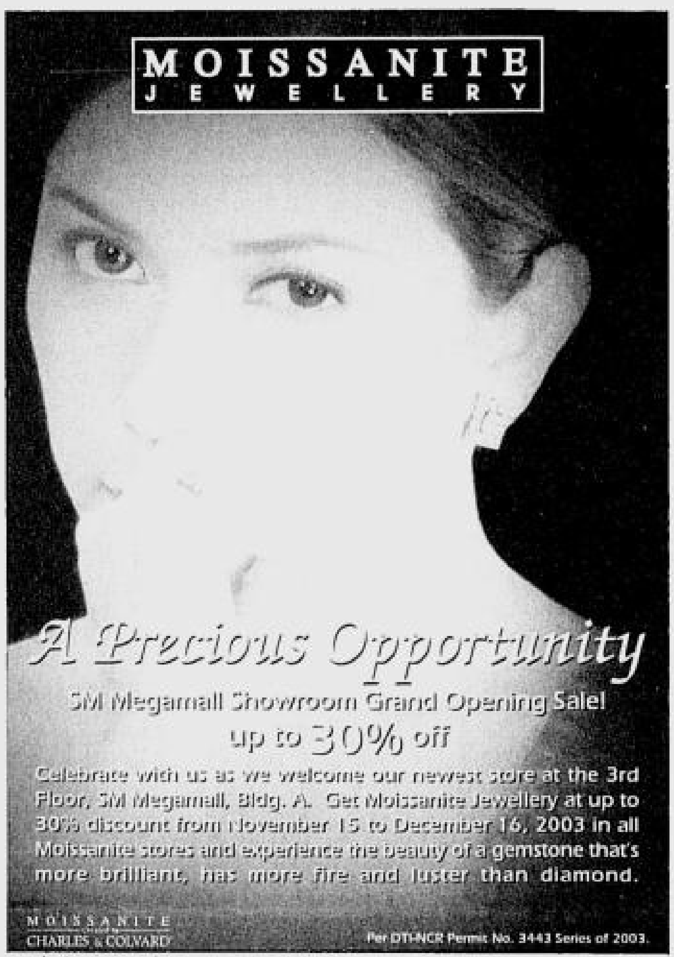

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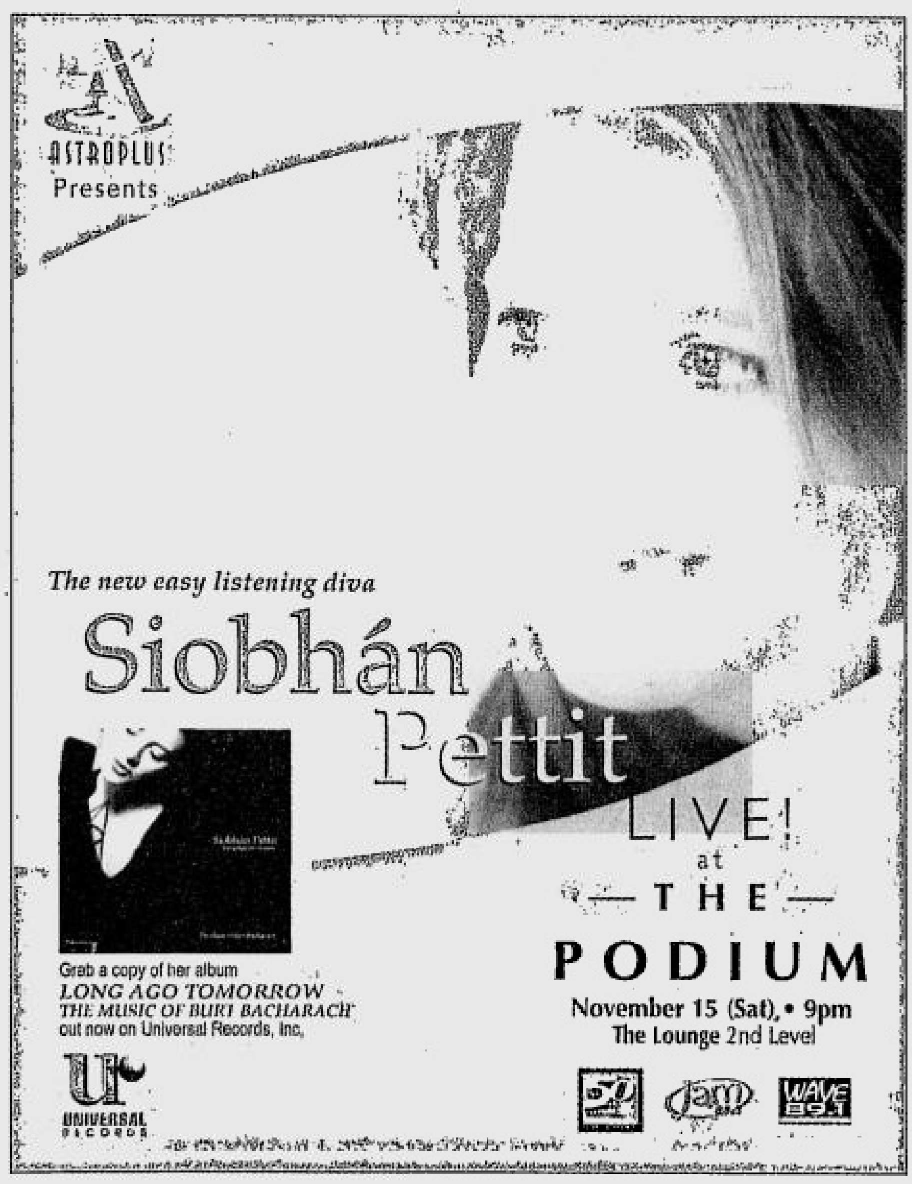

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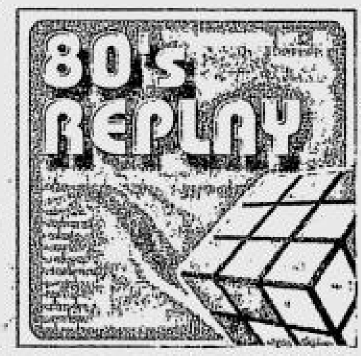

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Michael Bublé
5 **Long Ago Tomorrow**
Siobhan Pettit
6 **Coverage**
Mandy Moore
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8 **Totally Bublé**
Michael Bublé
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9 **Bigotilyo**
Parokya Ni Edgar
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10 **Popstar: A Dream Come True**
Sarah Geronimo
11 **The Movie Album**
Barbra Streisand
keyword: *indmood4luv*
12 **Master Of Chant Chapter IV**
Gregorian
keyword: *clocks*
13 **Life For Rent**
Dido
14 **Playlist**
Paolo Santos
keyword: *coffeecup*
15 **Acoustic Night Live**
Various Artists
16 **New York City**
The Peter Malick Group featuring Norah Jones
keyword: *newyorkcity*
17 **Buddha's Pest**
The Mongols
18 **Heavier Things**
John Mayer
keyword: *split*
19 **Sacred Love**
Sting
20 **A.K.A.: Almost Kinda Acoustic**
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21 **Remixes**
Mariah Carey
22 **The R. in R&B Greatest Hits Vol. 1**
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Simply Amazing!

Hart infused early westerns with poignancy and poetry

By Behn Cervantes

THE POIGNANCY and poetry that pervade a simple western yarn like "Shane" can be credited to an unlikely cowboy star named William S. Hart. By the time Hart appeared in a successful Western called "The Bargain" in 1914, he was already 44 years old. It was an age when most stars were quickly put out to pasture, pun intended. Westerns were staple movie fare, but they were most likely rushed and often wanting in quality, which was at its lowest when Hart entered the scene.

Epics

He entered the scene precisely when a dedicated western star-writer-director was needed. D.W. Griffith had made notable short westerns, but he had moved on to do the epics that he is best remembered for. Hart decided to make feature-length features. He injected them with "seriousness, dedication and realism," and created characters that the audience could empathize with. The hero was many-faceted.

HART. Entered the scene when a dedicated star-writer-director was needed.

Superficial traits

In effect, he produced what was to be labeled the first "adult" western. He was no longer satisfied with the superficial traits of the genre. Instead, he created the lonely rider whose point of view is changed by the dedication and love of a decent woman.

In Hart's case, most of his love interests were half his age. Despite his age, he allowed the younger audience to identify with him, if only as the respected father figure with untainted integrity and true grit.

He was acclaimed as the man who "put poetry in westerns." Among his most memorable films was "The Narrow Trail," reputed to have some of the best riding shots of that era. The climax comes when Hart lassoes the villain in Central Park.

"Hell's Hinges" is considered his masterpiece. In 1925, he made his last film, "Tumbleweeds," remembered by critics for "some of the best and most evocative sub-titles."

Attention to detail

His films were noted for their attention to detail, although he provided them with scope. Two other versions of "Cimarron" may have had bigger scenes but "none has matched the vitality of Hart," lauded an impressed critic.

William S. Hart contributed poetry as a lasting trait of the genre, still appreciated by the likes of Clint Eastwood and other western star-writer-directors. He saw beyond the action and gave the yarn meaning.

Gibson movie aims for February release

LOS ANGELES—Mel Gibson's controversial film on the crucifixion, "The Passion of Christ," will open in theaters next Ash Wednesday—Feb. 25—to mark the start of Lent, the actor and the film's newly chosen North American distribution company, Newmarket Films, said on Thursday.

Final 12 hours

The movie, which covers the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus Christ, has come under fire from some Jewish groups who claim its story could foment anti-Semitism by tying Christ's death to Jewish authorities.

But Catholic and other Christian groups, as well as biblical scholars, have defended the film, saying it sticks closely to accounts of the crucifixion as told in the New Testament.

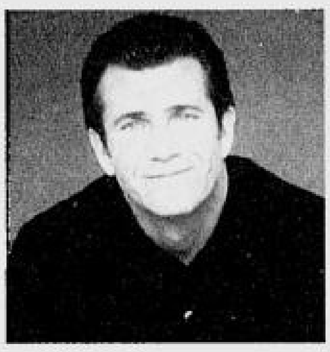
For months, the Oscar-winning Gibson and his movie company, Icon Productions, have been showing the film to various religious groups and leaders of many faiths to obtain feedback ahead of its release.

Gibson has defended the film and denied that either he or "Passion of Christ"—which for a time was simply titled "The Passion," are anti-Semitic.

Core message

"Anti-Semitism is not only contrary to my personal beliefs; it is also contrary to the core message of my movie. 'The Passion' is a film meant to inspire, not offend," Gibson has said in a statement.

Gibson paid $20 million to $25 million of his own money to make the movie, but despite his status as a top box office draw and winner of the best director Oscar for epic "Braveheart," Hollywood's major studios shied away from distributing the film due to the controversy surrounding it.



GIBSON. He says his film is meant to inspire, not offend.

In 1988, when Universal Pictures released Martin Scorsese's "The Last Temptation of Christ," the studio and theaters were picketed.

Newmarket, which will release the film in the United States and Canada, however, is a major player in the arena for independent films and no stranger to contentious subjects.

Religious film

Moreover, smaller distribution companies have enjoyed recent successes in the religious film genre by organizing grass-roots marketing campaigns, and independent company ThinkFilm is currently enjoying success with its biblical film, "The Gospel of John." Icon's own movie distribution division will release the film in the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand and handle distribution rights in other foreign territories. *Reuters*

Back at Huseng Batute after 21 years!

By Isay Alvarez

I WAS a member of the Metropolitan Theater Chorus during my college years and I would audition at the CCP for roles. And I would get lead parts! But I was afraid to leave my comfort zone (being a chorus girl who got little parts here and there) and did not accept those lead roles.

Female lead

Then "Magsimula Ka!" came . . . a winner of a CCP award by Gines Tan, who also composed the song that won the Metropop during that time. I auditoned (again!) and got the female lead. Tony Espejo, the artistic director of Bulwagang Gantimpala, took me aside and asked if I was serious about moving to the CCP to do this production, or was I just ego-tripping?

Well, I finally decided to move on, and did the musical. It was staged at Huseng Batute (Bulwagang Gantimpala then), with a small (200) seating capacity.

It was the most rewarding experience! It opened a lot of doors for me and I learned a lot from it.

We were all new talents and young(!)—Beverly Salviejo, Dio Marco, Jograd dela Torre, Tricia Amper, Rina Reyes, Bobby Martino, Bicong del Rosario and Robert Seña (who joined a year later).

Nightmares

Our director, NUT, must have had nightmares because we hardly had theater experience. With multiple roles, mega-quick costume changes, a super *kyut* backstage and one small dressing room for 15 actors—I thought, "If I survive this, I can survive anywhere!"

The musical was a big hit, and now I'm back in this *kyut* theater!

ALVAREZ. Appears in the stage version of "Himala."

"Himala" the musical of Ricky Lee, Vince de Jesus and Soxie Topacio, is now on its second week at Huseng Batute. The original 12 playdates are now 23 and requests are coming in to add more shows.

The shows tells the story of Elsa, how she and her town were consumed by "Himala." The cast includes May Bayot, Eladio Pamaran, Cynthia Guico, Lionel Guico, Dulce, Ariel Reonal and many other talented theater actors of Tanghalang Pilipino.

Rewarding

I almost forgot how much fun and how rewarding it is to be doing this kind of theater work. When I was younger, I would dabble in theater and music lounge acts. The latter was so I could live, while the former was so I could be fulfilled as a performer.

For many years I was busy in the show biz mainstream and my passion for theater performance took a back a seat. I'm thankful that "Himala" made me realize how much I miss this kind of work.

Working with people whose passion for this kind of performance that is not measured by talent fees has made me realize this is where I came from, and who I really am!

("Himala" at Huseng Batute, CCP: Nov. 15 and 16 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., Nov. 20-23 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.)

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'Lion King' roars back to life with DVD debut

LOS ANGELES—The king of cartoon cats is out to reclaim his throne.

"The Lion King" debuts in the United States Tuesday on DVD with hullabaloo more befitting a new movie than a nine-year-old flick. Walt Disney lavished painstaking care on the DVD, loading it with hours of extra material.

Premiere party

Disney staged a DVD premiere party at Hollywood's lush El Capitan theater, with Elton John performing songs from the film.

The "Bambi-meets-Hamlet" tale spins the story of Simba, a lion cub orphaned by the murder of his monarch father, who's slain by Simba's evil uncle. Tricked into believing he's responsible for his father's death, Simba flees into exile, returning years later to battle his uncle for his rightful crown.

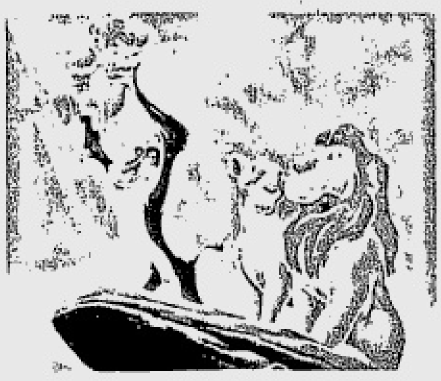
At $328.5 million, "The Lion King" had been the top-grossing animated film ever, until this year's biggest blockbuster, Disney-Pixar's "Finding Nemo." Factoring in today's higher admission prices, "Lion King" sold more tickets than "Finding Nemo."

Popular

"One of the reasons it was so popular is that it's about our relationships with our dad. You've got a character raised in great privilege, then he loses his dad, and he's tossed out in the world trying to make his way home," said producer Don Hahn.

Gordon Ho, senior vice president of marketing, said "The Lion King" is the most-requested Disney movie.

Two years in the making, "The Lion King" DVD precedes the home-video release of "Finding Nemo" by a month, with Disney's "Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl"—the year's second biggest hit—coming in December. Those three titles are expected to propel Disney home video to its best fourth-quarter sales ever.



"THE LION KING." Huge range of extras include deleted sequences, games and music videos.

A new version of the film with an extra song played in large-format Imax theaters this year.

The two-disc DVD set includes the original theatrical release of "The Lion King" plus the extended version, which adds the tune, "Morning Report," borrowed from the stage adaptation of the film.

Commentary

The huge range of DVD extras feature background on three deleted sequences; commentary by Hahn and directors Roger Allers and Rob Minkoff; loads of set-top games; and music videos by composer John performing his Academy Award-winning "Can You Feel the Love Tonight," plus Hilary Duff and other Disney Channel stars on "Circle of Life."

Unlike most Disney animated movies—which traditionally had been based on pre-existing stories such as "Cinderella" or "The Little Mermaid" and took a stage-musical approach to the melodies—"The Lion King" was a fresh tale powered by contemporary tunes. *AP*

Benicio del Toro . . .

From page E1

"21 Grams" co-star Naomi Watts to jokingly question, "What about me? Hello?"

"It's okay, these guys needed it," she added.

"21 Grams," which refers to the weight a body instantly loses when someone dies, interconnects the lives of reformed drug-addicted single mother (Watts), a professor (Sean Penn) and an ex-con (Del Toro) following a car crash. *AFP*

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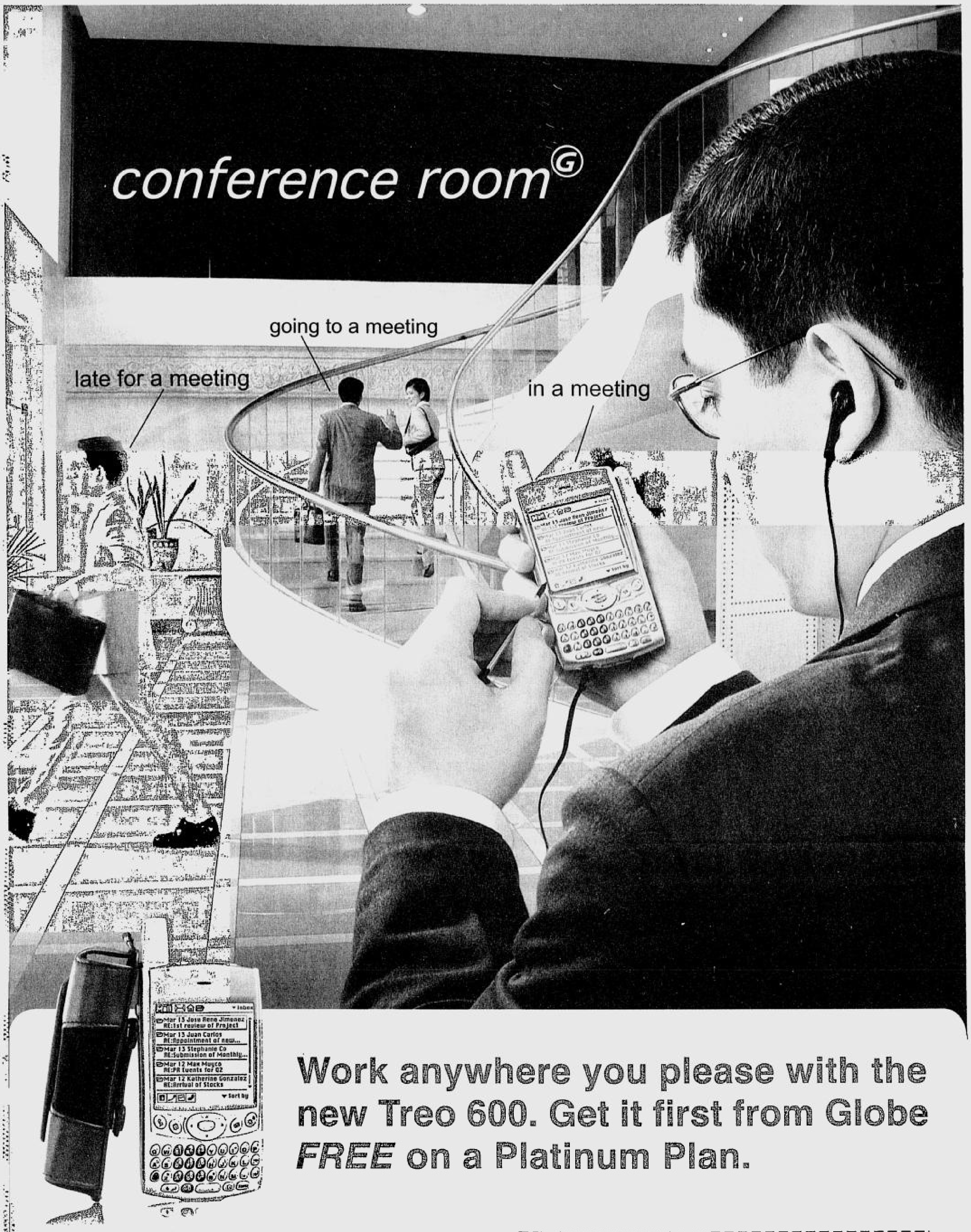

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SATURDAY *Special*

New Nora starrer out to prove detractors wrong

AUNOR. Exceptional talent who deserves a good showcase.

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR sometime now, we've been urging producers to cast Nora Aunor in a good movie that will showcase her exceptional acting ability and new maturity as an actress and film worker, and revive her film career.

Precious few takers

Sadly, there have been precious few takers, because most producers feel that Nora can no longer "carry" a movie and draw crowds. And some of them have been "burned" by Nora's past unprofessional actuations.

We disagree, of course, because we believe that Nora has changed for the better, and that she still has some great performances left in her that could astound and move audiences both here and abroad. But try telling that to once-bitten, twice-shy producers who keep their eyes focused on the bottom line.

Project

Some months ago, Elwood Perez did think up a project for Nora, but the Metro filmfest screening people didn't think it was all that great. Imagine that!

So, back to the drawing boards, There *must* be a producer out there who knows that Nora's exceptional talent still deserves a good showcase. All is not lost!

Critical and popular hit

Well, it truly isn't. Only recently, we were heartened to learn that, come Nov. 18, Maryo delos Reyes will start shooting a new Nora Aunor movie, "Naglalayag," with Yul Servo as Nora's co-star. We trust that this new film will turn out to be both a critical and popular hit, so Nora can reestablish herself as a movie actress.

The point really is no longer to make Nora a

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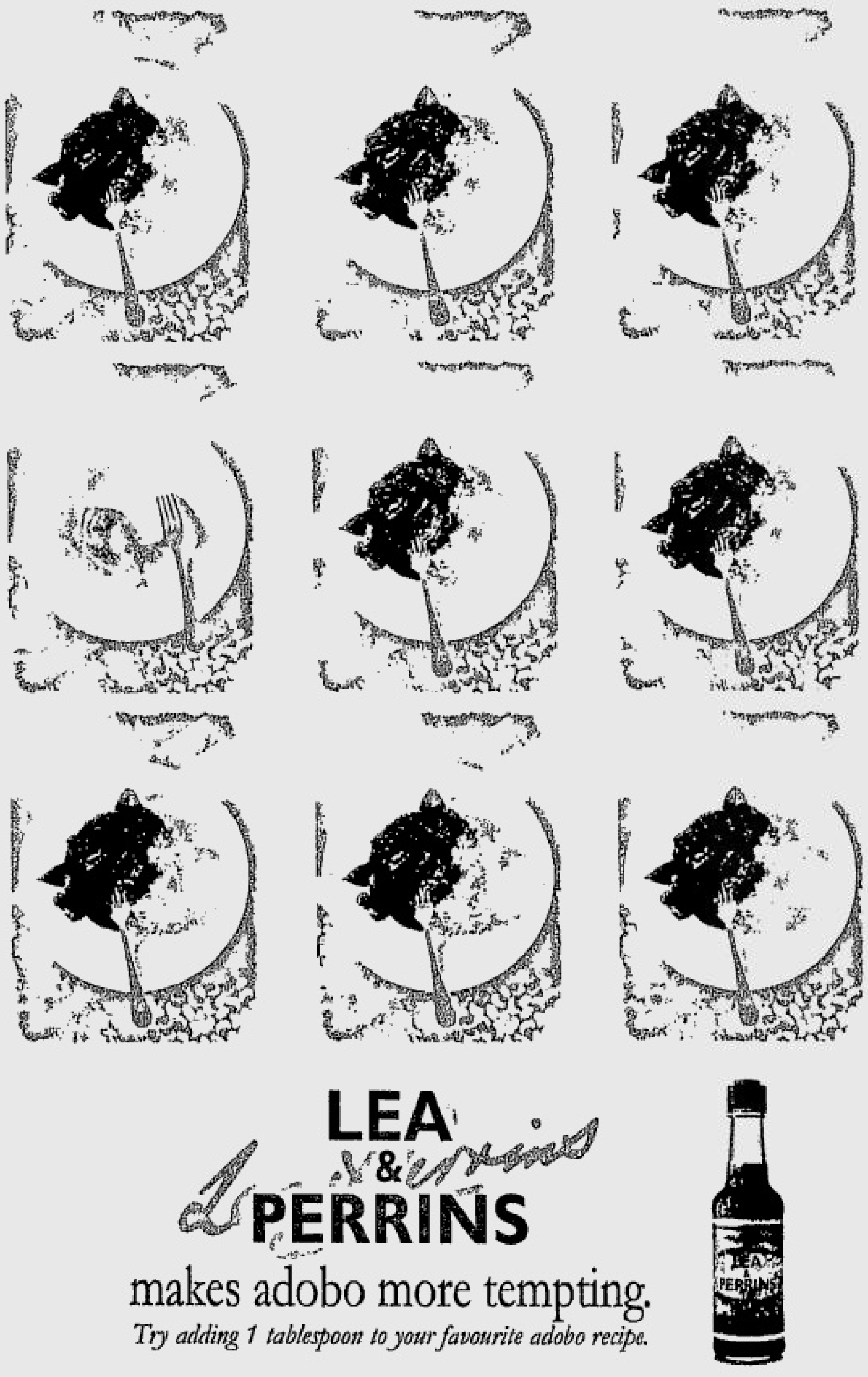
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New Nora starrer out to . . .

From page F1

major box-office star. After all, she *is* 50, and we all know that most local viewers are youths who favor similarly young stars they can empathize with.

But it's important for truly gifted film talents like Nora to continue to be productive, and make more movies that can move and inspire viewers of all ages.

So, we're fighting for Nora's talent, not her renewed popularity. But we know that popularity is required in these parts for

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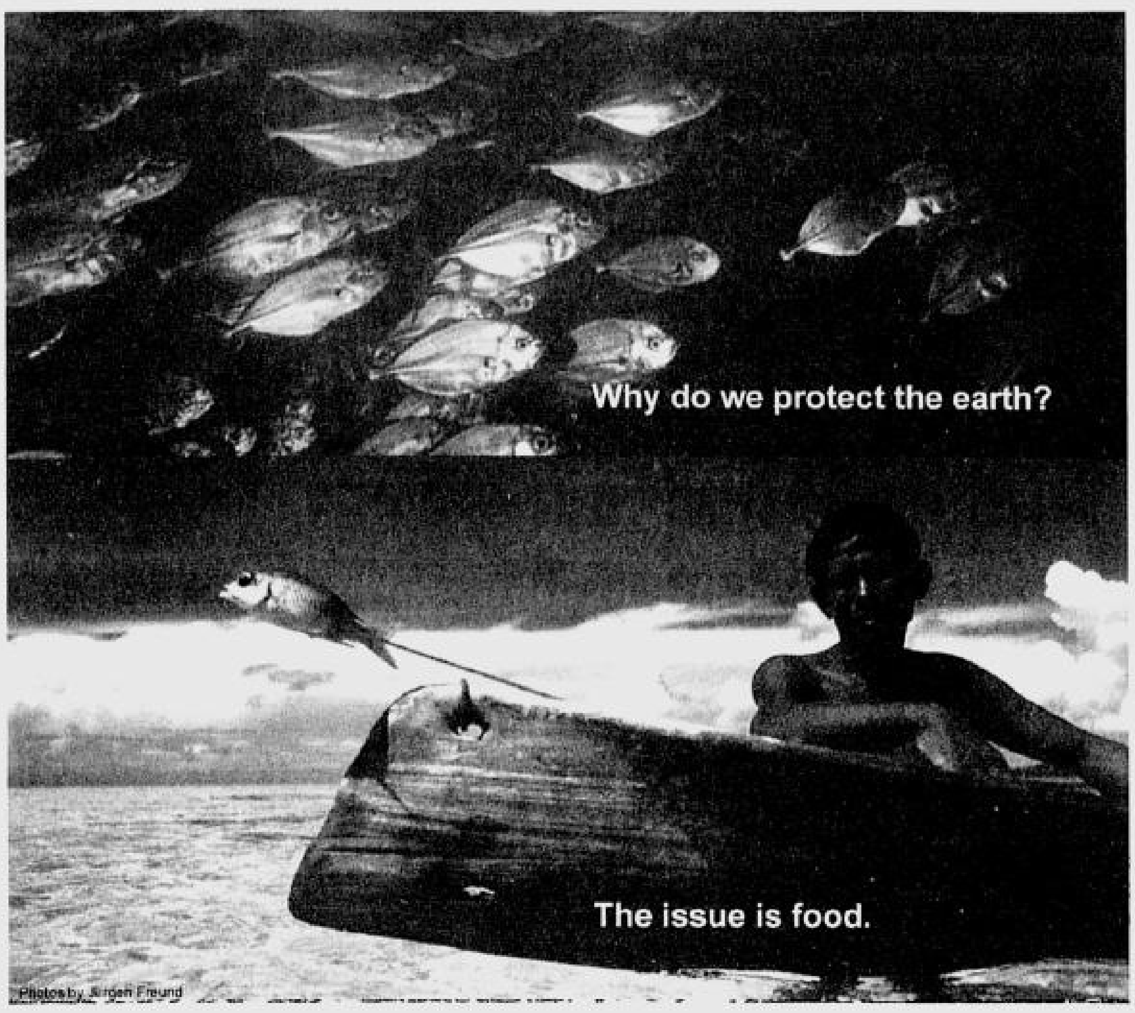

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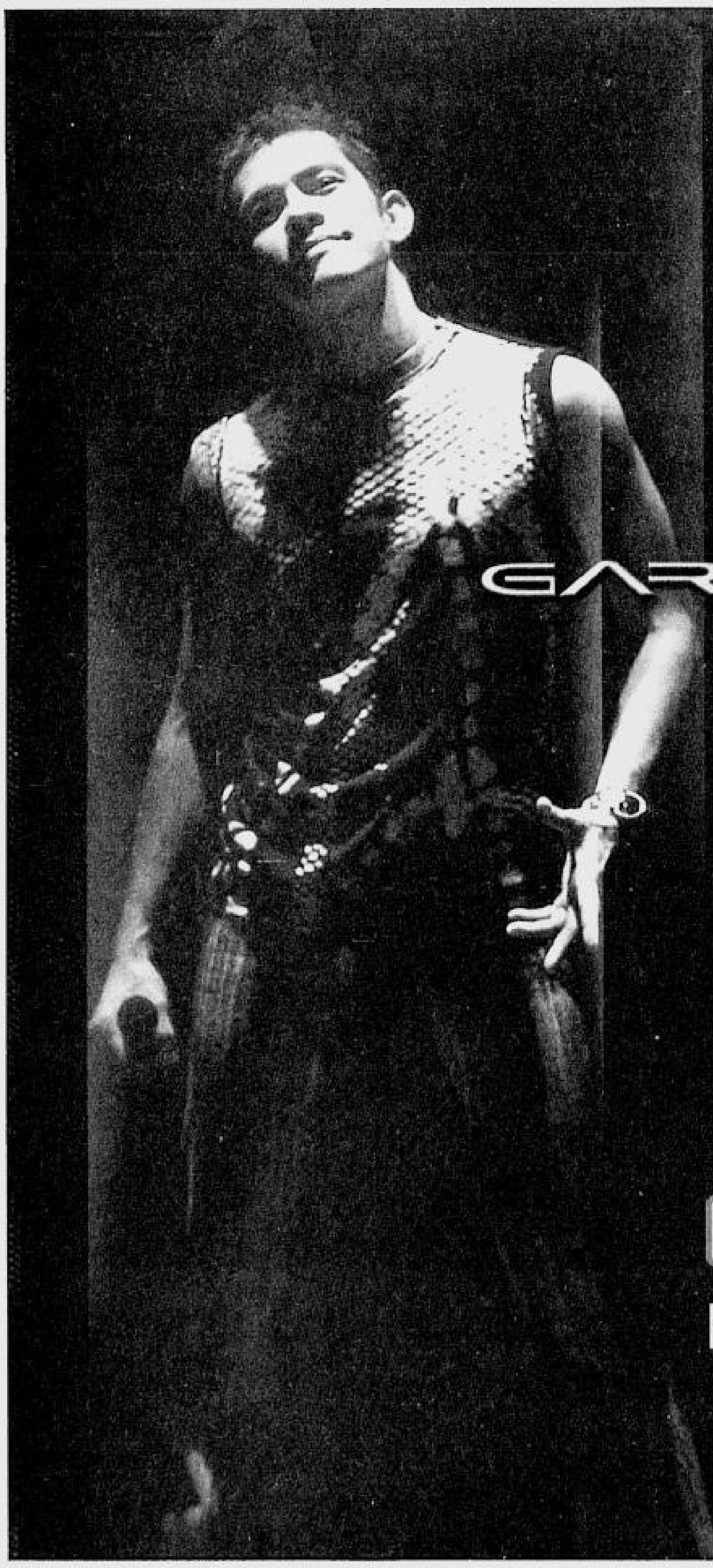

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GV 20 Years Of Gary Valenciano

Former child stars should act in movies again

By Nestor U. Torre

WHEN child stars become teenagers, and then adults, many of them lose their appeal to viewers and producers, who can't seem to accept former TV-movie tykes as grown-up performers.

Exceptions

There are exceptions, of course, like Vilma Santos, Maricel Soriano and Aiza Seguerra, who has successfully reinvented herself as an acoustic singer.

Unfortunately, viewers and industry people are less kind to most other former child stars, who eventually have to accept the humbling fact that they have lost their appeal on the screen. That's really too bad, and a poor use of creative resources, because some erstwhile child performers remain talented and interesting, even as adults.

It's such a waste to drop them like veritable hot potatoes, in favor of callow starlets whose only claim to fame is that they're younger than they are.

Take Snooky Serna and Niño Muhlach: When they were only three years old, they became bankable child stars who charmed an entire nation. They starred in many hits, and acted with the biggest adult stars in the land.

Inevitable time

But the inevitable time came when they hit their adolescent, and then their teen years, and their stellar careers dimmed. Snooky was still popular as a teen star, but by the time she reached her mid-20s, the curse of the calendar had taken its toll even on her unusually lengthy career.

To our mind, however, Snooky and Niño are even better talents now than they were when they were precocious child performers. All they need is an enlightened producer, a good film project and savvy promotions to still interest and captivate viewers today. Let's hope that they do get the comeback vehicles they so richly deserve.

MUHLACH AND SERNA. Better talents now than when they were precocious tykes.

If those comeback starrers are long in coming, Snooky and Niño should consider acting onstage. Theater productions are much less expensive to mount, and provide performers with even more challenging roles than TV and the movies can offer, so their acting ability can be more effectively showcased.

These thoughts come to mind because we recently saw Snooky, Niño and other outstanding former stars featured on GMA-7's "Partners: Mel & Jay." We thank the show for the feature, because it reminded us and other viewers that we have a wealth of often untapped or under-utilized talent in our erstwhile child luminaries.

Exceedingly young

Snooky and Niño recalled on the show that they were exceedingly young when stardom beckoned. Snooky was known for crying at the drop of a hankie, so she was asked to reveal the secret of her unusual ability. Her explanation: All she had to do was think that her mother, Mila Ocampo, was leaving her, and the flood of tears would automatically flow.

TV sidekick

As for Niño, he remembered that, when he auditioned to become Ariel Ureta's TV sidekick, he didn't know that Ariel was looking for a girl. When he was shunted off to one side, the perky two-and-a-half-year-old tyke piped up, "But I can do everything those girls can!" Ariel was so bowled over by little Niño's self-confidence and gift for spontaneous gab that he hired the boy on the spot.

We submit that Snooky can still be showcased as an excellent dramatic lead, and Niño has it in him to make a big comeback as one of our finest comedians. The thing, of course, is to think up the right projects for them. And so, to brainstorm!

Getting to know rapper Bubba Sparxxx

NEW YORK—Bubba Sparxxx's voice is a weird mixture of southern drawl and urban slang. He's polite and humble, but not afraid to slap down a few cusses when necessary.

Tremendous success

The self-proclaimed country-boy from LaGrange, Georgia, had tremendous success with his first rap CD, "Dark Days, Bright Nights," which debuted at No. 3 on the Billboard chart in 2001. It was propelled by the video for "Ugly," starring several scantily clad babes and a whole bunch of naked pigs.

But he's not too worried about living up to that success. In fact, he doesn't much care about it.

His new album, "Deliverance," which like his first was produced by label head Timbaland, fuses country and hip-hop in daring fashion. Songs like "Comin' Round" are an all-out hoe-down with fiddles and feet stompin', while others like "Hootnanny" are pure hip-hop.

It's all about the "new South," as Sparxxx calls it, where music isn't ruled by Nashville and the songs focus more on country living. Q & A:

Where did the name Bubba Sparxxx come from?

In the rural South, "bubba" is like how people say "dude" in California. It's a name for a regular southern man. I know a Chinese bubba, a black bubba. Sparxxx is something I just came up with.

Moonshine

I knew a lot of people that made and ran moonshine back home, and triple-X represents potency. If you get a jug of shine and it has three X's, you know it's the good stuff.

Are you worried you're too country for hip-hop, and too hip-hop for country?

That's the challenge, isn't it? To walk the line, to bring those two things together. I think we've taken huge strides toward accomplishing it, and there's room for more people . . . I balanced the hee-haw stuff with more serious lyrics, and we tried to liven up serious lyrics with exciting beats.

The photos on your album show you with a rifle, in camouflage, wielding a big knife and holding a jug of moonshine. Is this a gimmick? Or is this really you?

People really gave it to me after my first album. But look, this is me. If y'all think that where I come from is a joke, you haven't seen country yet.

How do you define the "new South"?

It's a movement. Making people understand what happens in rural life. We deal with the same violence, drugs and trouble that people do in cities. It's the new South as opposed to the old. The only thing I want to bring along is the charm. The South has been through a lot.

Different place

It's a different place now in terms of race relations, and backwardness. But I want to see a day when the southern states aren't 40-to-50th in the US for education and stuff. You've gotta bring those issues to light.

Did you really name the album after the creepy movie "Deliverance?"

Yes, but it wasn't just about the "squeal like a pig" thing. I mean, John Voigt's character, everything that he endured, that's what I'm talking about.

He was so comfortable in his suburban life and then, he's out there in a survival-of-the-fittest situation, and sees himself rise to the occasion and overcome every obstacle. But of course, I like the shock value of the name.

Do you have a pet pig?

The only examples I know of people actually having pet pigs are Charlotte's Web and in that movie "Varsity Blues." Raising and slaughtering pigs is a livelihood where I come from. I mean, where do you think we get bacon from?

What do you think about being compared to Eminem?

I think I don't deserve to be mentioned in the same breath. Do I think I have the same potential? Yes, but as far as my accomplishments, they don't stand up.

White dude

I do happen to be a white dude, and the CEO of my label is black, and Eminem also has a CEO who's black and a mentor in Dr. Dre, but I think the comparisons between us begin and end with us both being white.

Who do you want your audience to be?

Hopefully the same people that buy all hip-hop. There are a lot of people in Omaha, Nebraska, Fort Payne, Alabama, LaGrange, Georgia, and Tupelo, Mississippi who love hip-hop music. They listen to Jay-Z, and they love it! But there's a certain side of them that can't relate.

I'm talking about Asian kids, black kids and white kids, too. They were never there in Brooklyn in the projects. Riding around in their trucks, they may even feel a little embarrassed because they don't get it. That's the Bubba Sparxxx market. That's where I come from. AP

BUBBA
BUBBA
BUBBA
BUBBA SPARXXX

SPARXXX. His top-selling album, "Deliverance," fuses country and hip-hop in daring fashion.

AP

New Nora starrer . . .

From page F2

good projects to be made, because movies must make a profit to be worth their producers' while, so we trust that "Naglalayag" will also be financially rewarding for its makers.

Proven excellence

And let's hope that other producers will follow this new movie's lead. We're not pushing only for Nora here, but for all of the exceptional but underutilized film talents we have—actors, directors and scriptwriters of proven excellence who have been put on a shelf or in the deep freeze by producers.

We submit that one reason why the local movie industry is in terrible trouble today is because it has made poor use of some of its best talents.

Instead, it has nervously and even desperately opted to go after shallow fads and trends, and develop similarly shallow stars who turn viewers off with their obvious lack of talent.

Showcased properly, our proven talents could make the local film scene exciting and more substantial again, and save the Filipino movie industry from itself.

It's worth trying—starting with the iconic example of Nora Aunor. May other enlightened producers follow!

Difficult path . . .

From page F4

film option attached.

"If a film version happens, it is a great bonus for the book. It can give a breath of new life to a book that has been paperbacking for a few years."

1.5 M copies

He recalled Frank McCourt's Pulitzer Prize-winning "Angela's Ashes," which sold about 1.5 million copies in Britain and the Commonwealth before the Alan Parker film came out and another half a million afterwards.

But the movie, a lame, humorless affair, was a box-office flop.

Other failed book-to-screen adaptations in recent years have included Louis de Bernieres' "Captain Corelli's Mandolin" and Nick Hornby's "High Fidelity," both of which had been bestsellers in their written form.

Of course, there is also the inverse: books based on a film. It seems that any movie these days has a cross-promotional book hanging on its coattails.

Even though Martin Scorsese's film, "Gangs of New York," was based on a novel of the same name, Miramax still brought out a "Making of . . ." book. *AFP*

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Difficult path from novel to film traced in Frankfurt book fair

FRANKFURT—Does a good book always make a good film? It's a question that occupies publishers and writers at the world's largest book fair as they recall box-office smashes—and a few turkeys.

Classics

Classics from "Gone with the Wind" to "The English Patient," both multiple Oscar winners, show the potency of a good movie adapted from literature.

But there have been notable turkeys too: the instantly forgettable "Bonfire of the Vanities" or "The Beach," both based on bestsellers.

"A good book can be a great backbone. The skeleton is there, the structure is there," a spokeswoman for Miramax Books said at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

"But filmmaking is a collaborative process. There are so many areas where things can and do go wrong, sometimes it's a miracle that a good film is ever made," added the spokeswoman, who also reviews screenplays.

Miramax Books is part of the Miramax movie group that produced "The English Patient" from the Michael Ondaatje novel.

VIVIEN Leigh starred as Scarlet O'Hara in the film version of Margaret Mitchell's "Gone with the Wind."

Film version

It is placing high hopes on "Cold Mountain," a film version of the Charles Frazier novel, which stars Nicole Kidman, Renee Zellweger and Jude Law.

She put the stress on a good script rather than the novel, even if it means changing crucial elements to render them more cinema-friendly—"The English Patient," famously, has a different ending to the book.

Nevertheless, the fair's director, Volker Neumann, said the crossover between literature and the cinema was both inevitable and growing.

"Films and books belong together," he said, noting the huge success of the "Harry Potter" novels and movies.

A spokesman for publisher HarperCollins UK said most good books will have a

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Mandy Moore takes being a role model to heart

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Ivy Grace Guingab of Project 3, QC: "I can't wait to see Mandy Moore perform this month at The Fort and the Araneta Colisuem. How was she discovered?"

Befriend your next-day delivery guy! This is Mandy Moore's message to aspiring singers. She was recording a demo tape at 14, when a FedEx worker who was passing by, heard her. Luckily for her, he happened to know someone at Sony Music.

Recording deal

Thereafter, she landed a recording deal with the company, and fulfilled a dream that began when she was six years old after watching the musical, "Oklahoma!" Her mother, a newspaper reporter, would accompany her to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at several athletic events around her hometown, and she became known as the "National Anthem girl."

At 15, her first record, "So Real," rode the hype over the Backstreet Boys, with whom she toured. It went platinum, and so did her follow-up album, "I Wanna Be With You." But, unlike her high profile contemporaries, Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera, Mandy refused to wear revealing outfits.

She reasoned, "I wasn't comfortable doing that. Occasionally, I'm going to dress a little sexier, but that doesn't mean I'll go out in a tube or bra top with a little miniskirt!"

Her movie career started with a supporting role in "Magic Al and the Mind Factory," followed by Disney's "The Princess Diaries." She was the voice of the Girl Bear Cub in Eddie Murphy's "Dr. Dolittle 2."

Unexpected blockbuster

In 2002, she topbilled the unexpected blockbuster, "A Walk To Remember," with Shane West. Budgeted at only $11 million, the film earned $41 million in the US alone. It also spawned several hit songs—"Cry," "Only Hope," and "Someday We'll Know." The film made Mandy a major Hollywood talent whose stellar influence carried the indie films she chose to do—"All I Want" ("Try Seventeen" in some countries) with Elijah Wood, and the recent "How To Deal."

This early, though, Mandy plans a mid-30s retirement. She feels she's already had the best of life—she believes she'll be ready to settle down then, and disappear from the limelight. She is currently dating tennis sensation Andy Roddick, who is two years older.

She says, "If you see me in a movie when I'm 37, pull me aside and ask me what's going on! I want to have a family. I want to have gone to college by then and to live somewhere suburban, quiet and regular—I'll probably be singing karaoke in a bar!"

While shooting a film last year, Mandy would sneak out to enjoy karaoke bars with co-star Macaulay Culkin. She is glad she decided to go into acting. To her, actors have an easier life than singers:

"Actors don't realize how easy they have it. Musicians are always traveling, we constantly have to change plans at a moment's notice. As an actor, when you're on location, you have such a nice regimented schedule."

Normal guy

On her relationship with the Roddick, she says, "You won't find a more normal guy. He's so unaffected by everything that goes on around him. I'm very happy, but I don't want a serious commitment yet. We both have too much going on."

Mandy takes her being a role model for teenagers to heart. This is reflected by the roles she chooses to play. She will be seen next in Brian Dannelly's "Saved" (with Culkin), about a girl at a southern Baptist high school who finds that her pregnancy is making her an outcast among ultra-religious teenagers.

Then, she will appear in Andy Cadiff's romantic comedy, "Chasing Liberty," where she plays the title role of the American president's (Mark Harmon) daughter, who escapes from her bodyguards, and jets to Europe with her boyfriend.

She will lend her vocal prowess to the animation adventure, "Racing Stripes," about an abandoned zebra (voiced by Frankie Muniz) who grows up believing he is a racehorse. And she will also be in Wes Craven's spine-tingler, "Cursed."

Mandy, who still lives with her parents, got a lot of publicity for changing her hair color from natural blonde to brunette, since most people do the opposite.,

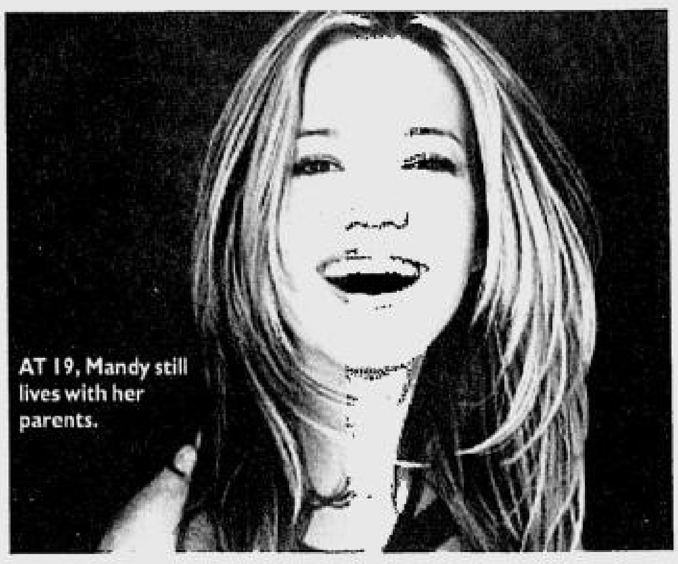
In her latest album, "Coverage," Mandy will sing songs popularized by Carly Simon, ("Anticipation"), Carole King ("I Feel The Earth Move"), Joni Mitchell and Joe Jackson.

'Stones in His Pockets'

NVC's final offering for its current theater season, Marie Jones' Olivier Award-winning comedy, "Stones in His Pockets," will go onstage at the Republic of Malate on Nov. 21, 22, 28 and 29 with Saturday matinees at 3:30 p.m. It stars versatile actors Michael Williams and Jamie Wilson. Call New Voice at 896-5497. See you there!

> She's a major Hollywood talent whose stellar influence carries the indie films she chooses to do

MOORE. Got a lot of attention for changing her hair color from natural blonde to brunette.



AT 19, Mandy still lives with her parents.

Its phonebook has 200 entries.

It can be used 50 meters from its base.

It has built-in Caller ID.

It can send & receive text.

IT'S FREE.

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SIEMENS
SIEMENS
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4010
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A PLDT Hype handset with these awesome features can be free with PLDT Value Plus Plans. But we're just getting started. We'll also throw in free text messages, free NDD minutes, and free PLDT Vibe Internet minutes. Plus you can save like crazy with discounts on IDD rates and our Caller ID service. So if you're free anytime soon, get hooked on to a PLDT Value Plus Plan.

PLDT valuePlus Plans

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Line Monthly Service Fee (Local Calls)	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
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See leaflets for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3267 series of 2003.

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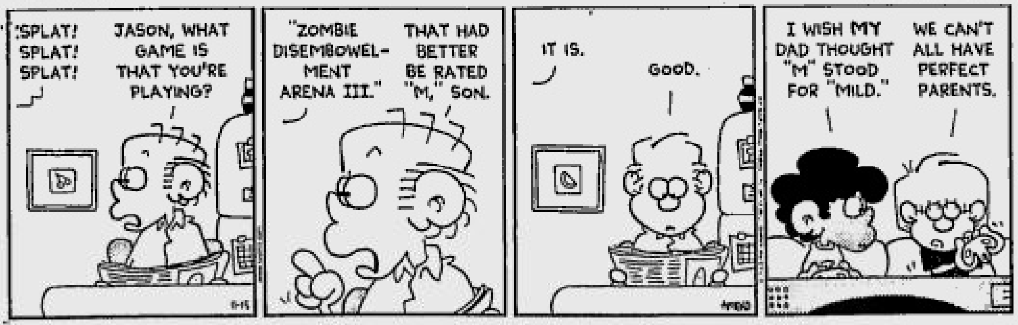
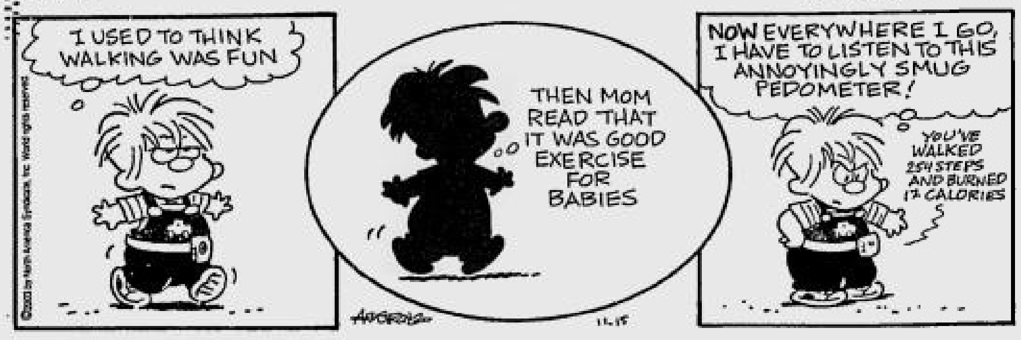
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


SPLAT! SPLAT! SPLAT!
JASON, WHAT GAME IS THAT YOU'RE PLAYING?
"ZOMBIE DISEMBOWELMENT ARENA III."
THAT HAD BETTER BE RATED "M," SON.
IT IS.
GOOD.
I WISH MY DAD THOUGHT "M" STOOD FOR "MILD."
WE CAN'T ALL HAVE PERFECT PARENTS.

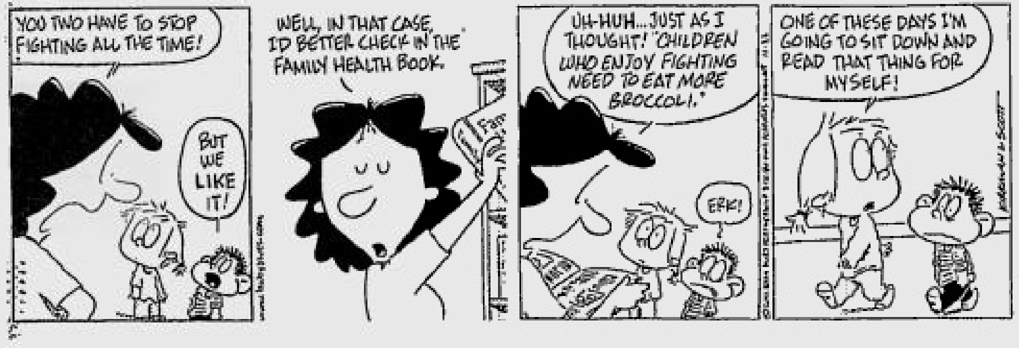
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I USED TO THINK WALKING WAS FUN
THEN MOM READ THAT IT WAS GOOD EXERCISE FOR BABIES
NOW EVERYWHERE I GO, I HAVE TO LISTEN TO THIS ANNOYINGLY SMUG PEDOMETER!
YOU'VE WALKED 254 STEPS AND BURNED 17 CALORIES

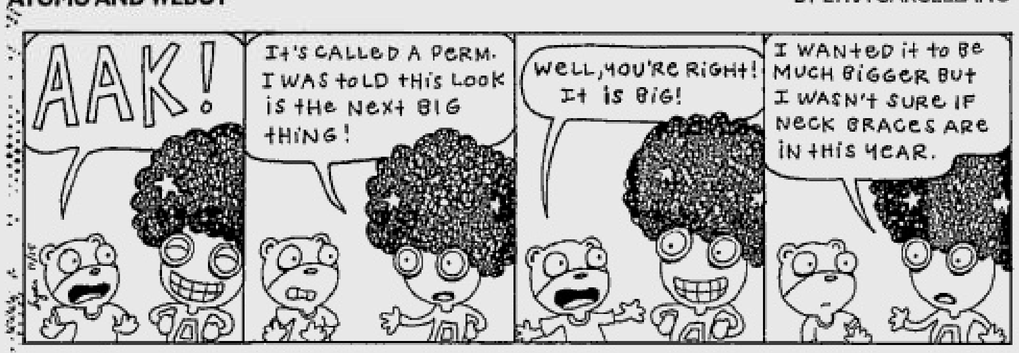
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


YOU TWO HAVE TO STOP FIGHTING ALL THE TIME!
BUT WE LIKE IT!
WELL, IN THAT CASE, I'D BETTER CHECK IN THE FAMILY HEALTH BOOK.
UH-HUH...JUST AS I THOUGHT! "CHILDREN WHO ENJOY FIGHTING NEED TO EAT MORE BROCCOLI."
ERK!
ONE OF THESE DAYS I'M GOING TO SIT DOWN AND READ THAT THING FOR MYSELF!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AAK!
It's CALLED A PERM. I WAS tOLD this LOOK is the NEXT BIG thing!
WELL, YOU'RE RIGHT! It is BIG!
I WANTED it to BE MUCH BIGGER BUT I WASN'T SURE IF NECK BRACES ARE IN this YEAR.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong sense of self. You will not sacrifice your individualism to please others. Your patience and courage give you strength. You inspire others because you don't back down from what you believe in. Major changes will take place this year—changes for the better.
Birthdate of: Sam Waterston, actor; Georgia O'Keeffe, artist; Ed Asner, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good time to think of anything you can do to improve yourself—physically, emotionally, or with respect to career . You have a strong desire to become a better person now.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be open to what you can learn from others, especially those who are closest to you. With the Sun opposite your sign, others can help you discover more about yourself.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Galvanize yourself into action. Do anything that helps you get better organized. You might want to start by getting rid of 10 things you no longer need or use.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Give extra attention to children and young people in your life now. You will not regret it. Much can be learned from the mouths of babes.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You are correct to devote your attention to home, family and real estate matters now. Set your house in order. Your creative skills can help you do this.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Increased contact with siblings and relatives can benefit you now. This is the perfect time to mend broken fences and patch up differences. (Life is too short to hold a grudge.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's important to give serious thought to major purchases now. You want your possessions to make your life easier in some way. Furthermore, you want to establish greater control over your life through what you own.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Do not hesitate to put yourself first now. With the Sun in your sign, it's your turn to replenish yourself as you enter your new personal year.

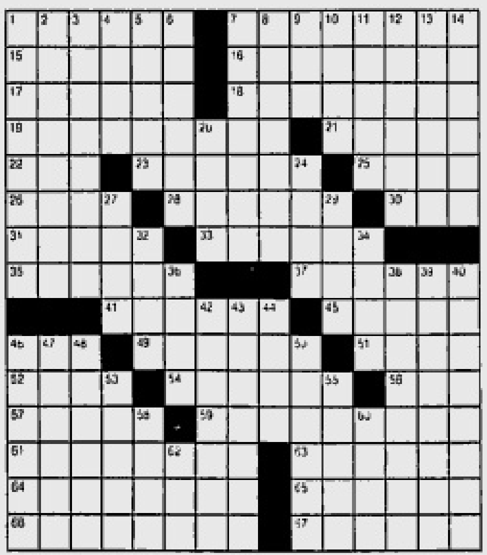
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Even though you have a desire to see people now, you still need solitude, rest, peace and quiet. You have to mentally sort things out.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Others look to you for guidance now. You don't have to direct them, but you could share your hopes and dreams for the future. This might provide a beacon for others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You easily impress important people now. By all means, make an effort to put your best foot forward. (You might as well milk this for all it's worth.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Travel plans as well as back-to-school plans look promising. You're determined to broaden your horizons and learn more about the world.

DAILY CROSSWORD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By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

11/15/03

ACROSS
1 Take stock of
7 Rubbed-out spots
15 Metcalf of "Roseanne"
16 Put off
17 Running with ease
18 Liverleaf
19 Not restrained by limits
21 Philippines machetes
22 Black goo
23 Covered with trees
25 Stout's Wolfe
26 Chinawood oil
28 Piercing cry
30 Hibernation spot
31 Satellite of Jupiter
33 Destinies
35 French dancer Petit
37 Tree trimmer
41 Czar's edicts
45 Bloodsucker
46 Air-leak sound
49 Kosygin or Nemov
51 Zen Buddhist sect
52 Listen to
54 Cornell's location
56 Land east of Eden
57 Tomcat's hangout
59 Sustained barrage
61 Granary pest
63 Select social classes
64 Accused person
65 Serengeti trek
66 Said again
67 Geena Davis movie, "__ and Louise"

DOWN
1 Distributor
2 Brazilian metropolis
3 Heavenly
4 Poet's Ireland
5 Muscle
6 Musical repeat signs
7 Desert plant
8 Small Eurasian ruminant
9 Horned viper
10 Pierce
11 Writer Sinclair
12 Muddied
13 Repeat performance
14 Spring or fall
20 Wharf
24 Moist
27 Writer Shirley Ann
29 Loamy fertilizer
32 Singer Paul
34 Litigates
36 Spanish painter of limp watches
38 Newborn
39 Outer layer of a jellyfish
40 Zimbabwe, once
42 Liberate
43 Disinterred
44 Ross and Bering
46 Former Israeli P.M.
47 Goddess of the moon
48 Caesar and Waldorf
50 Most frigid
53 Used another match
55 God of Islam
58 Religion-based org. founded in 1858
60 Longest sentence?
62 Giant Mel

Friday's Puzzle Solved

F	A	T	E	D	■	D	I	A	L	■	K	A	Y	O
O	C	A	L	A	■	E	R	N	E	■	I	V	A	N
S	U	R	A	H	■	A	M	I	S	■	S	A	M	E
S	T	E	L	L	A	D	A	L	L	A	S	■	■	■
A	E	S	■	I	B	M	■	S	I	R	■	O	R	B
■	■	■	L	A	N	A	I	■	E	I	F	F	E	L
A	B	B	E	■	E	R	S	T	■	S	O	F	I	A
G	R	O	V	E	R	C	L	E	V	E	L	A	N	D
R	O	W	E	L	■	H	E	R	O	■	E	L	S	E
E	I	L	E	E	N	■	T	R	U	L	Y	■	■	■
E	L	S	■	N	E	T	■	A	C	E	■	A	G	E
■	■	■	R	I	V	E	R	P	H	O	E	N	I	X
G	O	N	E	■	A	L	A	I	■	N	A	I	V	E
A	R	E	A	■	D	E	R	N	■	E	S	T	E	R
P	E	E	L	■	A	X	E	S	■	S	T	A	R	T

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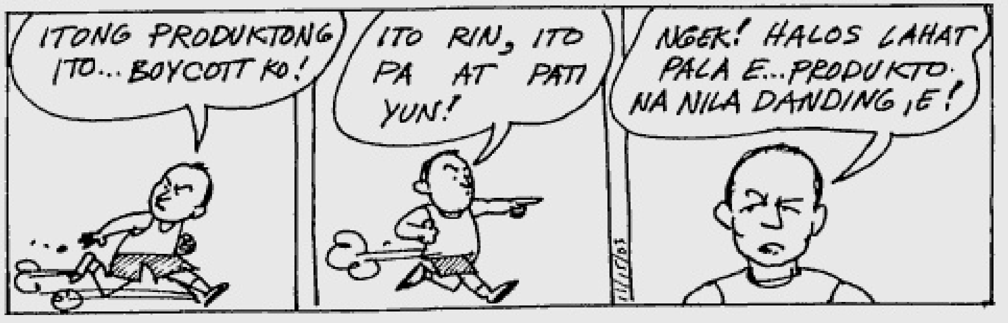
11/15/03

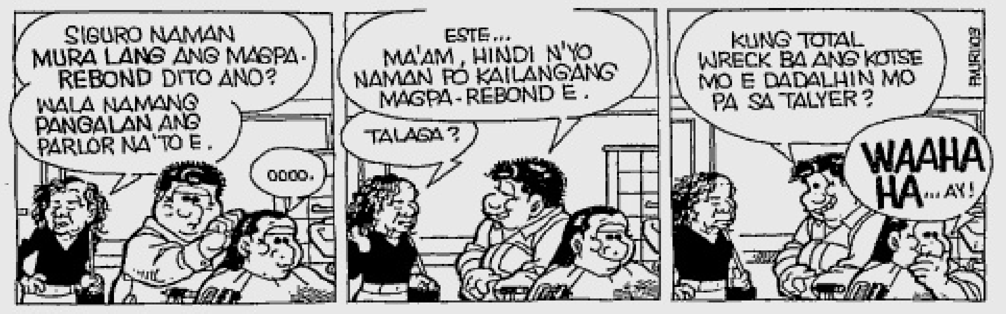
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ITONG PRODUKTONG ITO... BOYCOTT KO!
ITO RIN, ITO PA AT PATI YUN!
NGEK! HALOS LAHAT PALA E...PRODUKTO NA NILA DANDING, E!

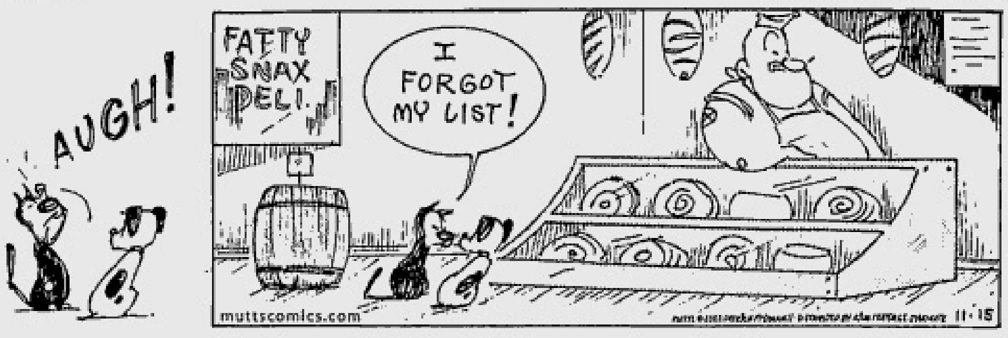
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SIGURO NAMAN MURA LANG ANG MAGPA-REBOND DITO ANO?
WALA NAMANG PANGALAN ANG PARLOR NA 'TO E.
OOOO.
ESTE... MA'AM, HINDI N'YO NAMAN PO KAILANGANG MAGPA-REBOND E.
TALAGA?
KUNG TOTAL WRECK BA ANG KOTSE MO E DADALHIN MO PA SA TALYER?
WAAHA HA... AY!

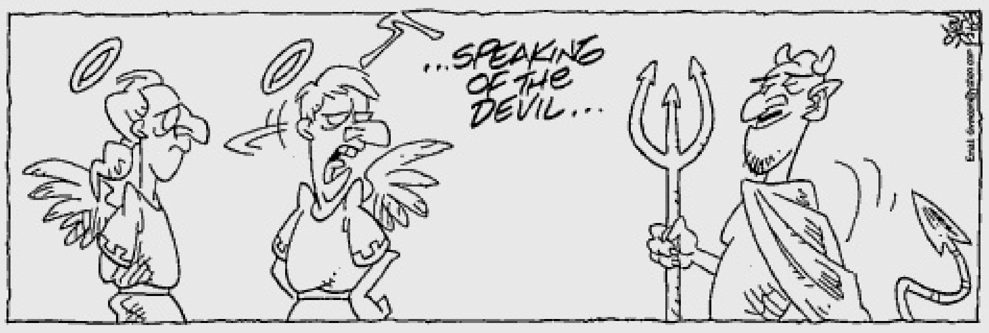
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


AUGH!
FATTY SNAX DELI
I FORGOT MY LIST!
muttscomics.com
11·15

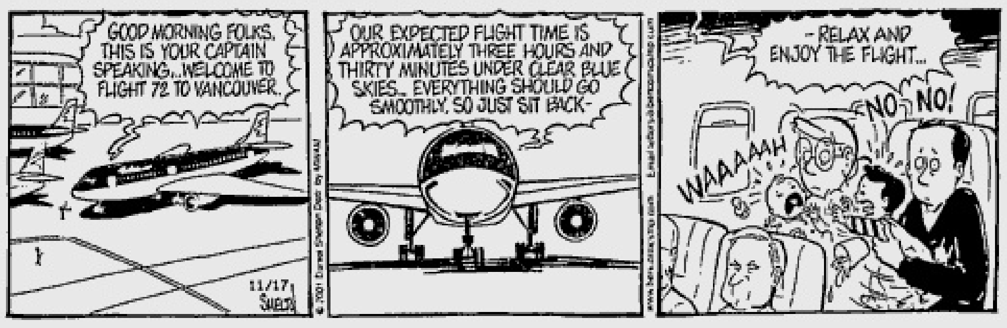
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


...SPEAKING OF THE DEVIL...

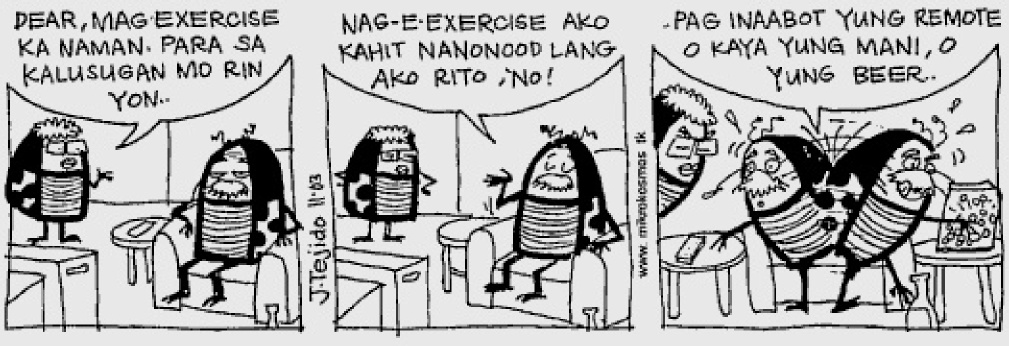
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GOOD MORNING FOLKS, THIS IS YOUR CAPTAIN SPEAKING...WELCOME TO FLIGHT 72 TO VANCOUVER.
OUR EXPECTED FLIGHT TIME IS APPROXIMATELY THREE HOURS AND THIRTY MINUTES UNDER CLEAR BLUE SKIES... EVERYTHING SHOULD GO SMOOTHLY, SO JUST SIT BACK-
- RELAX AND ENJOY THE FLIGHT...
NO NO!
WAAAAAH

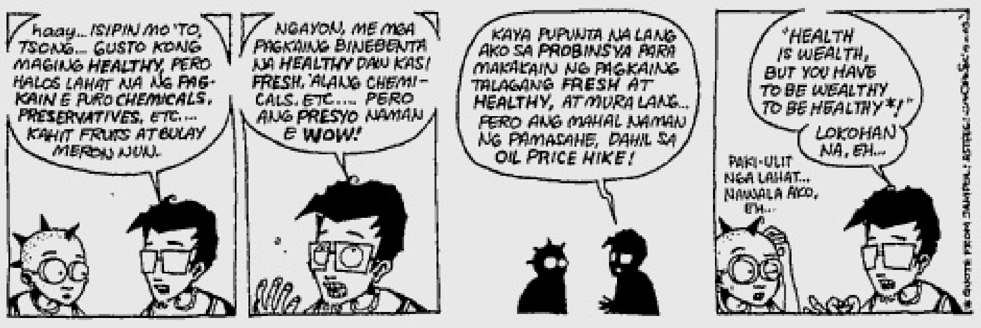
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


DEAR, MAG-EXERCISE KA NAMAN. PARA SA KALUSUGAN MO RIN YON..
NAG-E-EXERCISE AKO KAHIT NANONOOD LANG AKO RITO, 'NO!
PAG INAABOT YUNG REMOTE O KAYA YUNG MANI, O YUNG BEER..
J.Tejido 11-03
www.mikrokosmos.tk

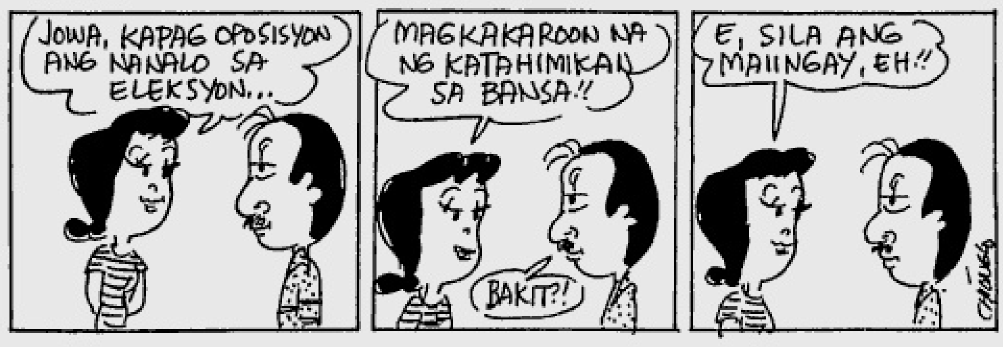
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haay... ISIPIN MO 'TO, TSONG... GUSTO KONG MAGING HEALTHY, PERO HALOS LAHAT NA NG PAGKAIN E PURO CHEMICALS, PRESERVATIVES, ETC.... KAHIT FRUITS AT GULAY MERON NUN.
NGAYON, ME MGA PAGKAING BINEBENTA NA HEALTHY DAW KASI FRESH, 'ALANG CHEMICALS, ETC.... PERO ANG PRESYO NAMAN E WOW!
KAYA PUPUNTA NA LANG AKO SA PROBINSYA PARA MAKAKAIN NG PAGKAING TALAGANG FRESH AT HEALTHY, AT MURA LANG... PERO ANG MAHAL NAMAN NG PAMASAHE, DAHIL SA OIL PRICE HIKE!
"HEALTH IS WEALTH, BUT YOU HAVE TO BE WEALTHY TO BE HEALTHY*!"
LOKOHAN NA, EH...
PAKI-ULIT NGA LAHAT... NAWALA AKO, EH...

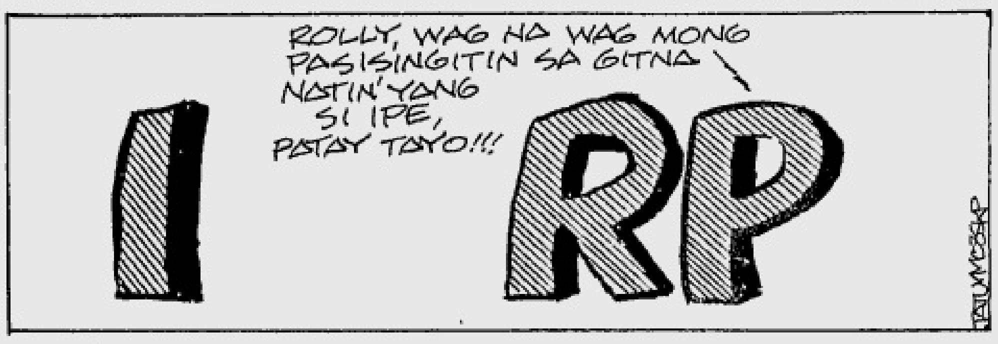
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, KAPAG OPOSISYON ANG NANALO SA ELEKSYON...
MAGKAKAROON NA NG KATAHIMIKAN SA BANSA!!
BAKIT?!
E, SILA ANG MAIINGAY, EH!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


ROLLY, WAG NA WAG MONG PASISINGITIN SA GITNA NATIN YANG SI IPE, PATAY TAYO!!!
I
RP

Search for National Artists evaluated

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME months ago, we got involved for the first time in the selection of the country's latest batch of National Artists. In fact, we participated in all three stages of the search, in various capacities. So, we arrived at a detailed understanding of how the 11-month process worked—and why, in some instances, it didn't.

EDDIE Romero is our new National Artist for Film and Broadcast Arts.

Lessons

We learned these lessons, and hope they inform our actions two years hence, when the next search for National Artists will be launched:

First, practically everybody wants to be hailed as a National Artist, even if he's obviously unqualified for the august honor. Thus, the "selectors" have to be prepared to displease many people, and to please only the four or six artists who do get chosen each time.

Second, some candidates and their supporters love to form cliques, some of which make it a point to vociferously champion the cause of their Chosen One, *and* even more loudly and viciously disparage The Competition.

In their view, if the selectors don't agree with them, they're either stupid, blindly biased, or for sale to the highest bidder.

As a result, the pressure from various quarters on the selectors is both enormous and vile, resulting in bitter feelings and sundered friendships all around.

Candidates

Third, the candidates are generally nominated by arts associations, which unfortunately tend to nominate administrators or educators, rather than exceptionally creative and visionary artists.

This runs counter to the search's main intent, so a lot of weeding out of scholarly or managerial types has to be done, thus offending the organizations that cited the nominees in the first place. Clearly, the nomination process has to be both enlightened and expanded.

Fourth, the choice of National Artists has been politicized, sometimes flouting the artist-jurors' choices, so the award has lost some of its stature, because it is no longer exclusively conferred on artists by their peers. It's important, therefore, for the legal aspect of the search to be definitely clarified before the 2005 awards.

Personally, we've learned that artists (as opposed to organizations) need to become more involved in looking for and endorsing *deserving* candidates for National Artists. Some outstanding artists who don't belong to influential organizations or cliques, or are based in the provinces, are often overlooked.

Artistic information

We *must* identify them and bolster their bids with complete artistic information *before* the 2005 search is launched.

It's important for the country's most truly gifted artists to win this ultimate award in the arts because standards have to be kept high, and genuine creativity must be acknowledged and rewarded.

It's tough being a real artist in this country, so our true creators and visionaries should be rewarded for their long and principled struggle. On the other hand, well-connected but mediocre artists should be denied the award, because they would water it down.

Those are the basic parameters we should observe in searching for and honoring our true National Artists. All else is grandstanding and self-promotion.

Home away from home

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

VANCOUVER, Canada—It takes about 45 minutes to drive from North Vancouver to Richmond, which is like the Asian town of Vancouver. Here, one will find the most inexpensive yet delicious Hong Kong Chinese cuisine. There are many mixed cultures in Richmond, mostly Chinese, East Indian, Eastern European and, of course, Pinoys.

Pinoy grocery

It is because of the many Filipinos in Richmond and the surrounding areas that my sister Stella and her husband Jay Belda decided to open a Pinoy Grocery called Tindahan.

I love to hang out at Tindahan. I socialize with Pinoys who find a "home" in the grocery. It is here where you can encounter the simplest and most hardworking Pinoys.

Of course, there are the amusing ones who have all of a sudden forgotten to speak Tagalog—after being in Vancouver for only three months! I remember a lady who walked in one morning and looked at my nephews, Toby and Bolo. I guess she wanted to say they looked alike, but she blurted out, "You look together!"

Various brands

The store carries mostly Filipino goods. The most popular items in the store are the *longganisas* of various brands (all made here), the *tocinos*, instant *mamis*, Skyflakes, Sarangani Bangus, and Brix Tan's Fafix boneless *bangus* and many more.

Aling Mary's *pandesal* is also a winner. This is one of the best-tasting *pandesals* I have eaten anywhere—heavy, extremely moist and delicious.

Also a bestseller is Palm corned beef, with its tasty chunks of meat. Toasted, it's a winner!

Another corner of the store displays Pinoy movies for rent. Instead of buying popcorn or some North American snack, we Pinoys prefer Chippy or *chicharon*. There are expensive cans of Sarsi and Royal Tru Orange, which occasionally get sold out.

Hanging out at Tindahan is a show in itself. You meet many *kababayans* from all walks of life, all striving to live better, but not wanting to lose touch with our one and only 'Pinas—through our food!

Happy Eating!

For comments, email sandydaza@shaw.ca

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horoscope
Wisdom in full color.
Introducing SMART zed MMX Horoscope. A full-color horoscope reading that's animated too. Get it automatically every day! Only P10 per horoscope.
Scorpio
Today during the day you feel that everything is all right, and you have nothing to fear. You express your self-confidence by being above petty irritations. You will get what you give: kindness, friendship and nurturing support.
How to subscribe to MMX Horoscope. For MMS-capable handsets only.
1 Type MMXH ON «zodiac sign» Ex: MMXH ON SCORPIO
2 Send to 288.
3 You will start receiving a horoscope reading every day.
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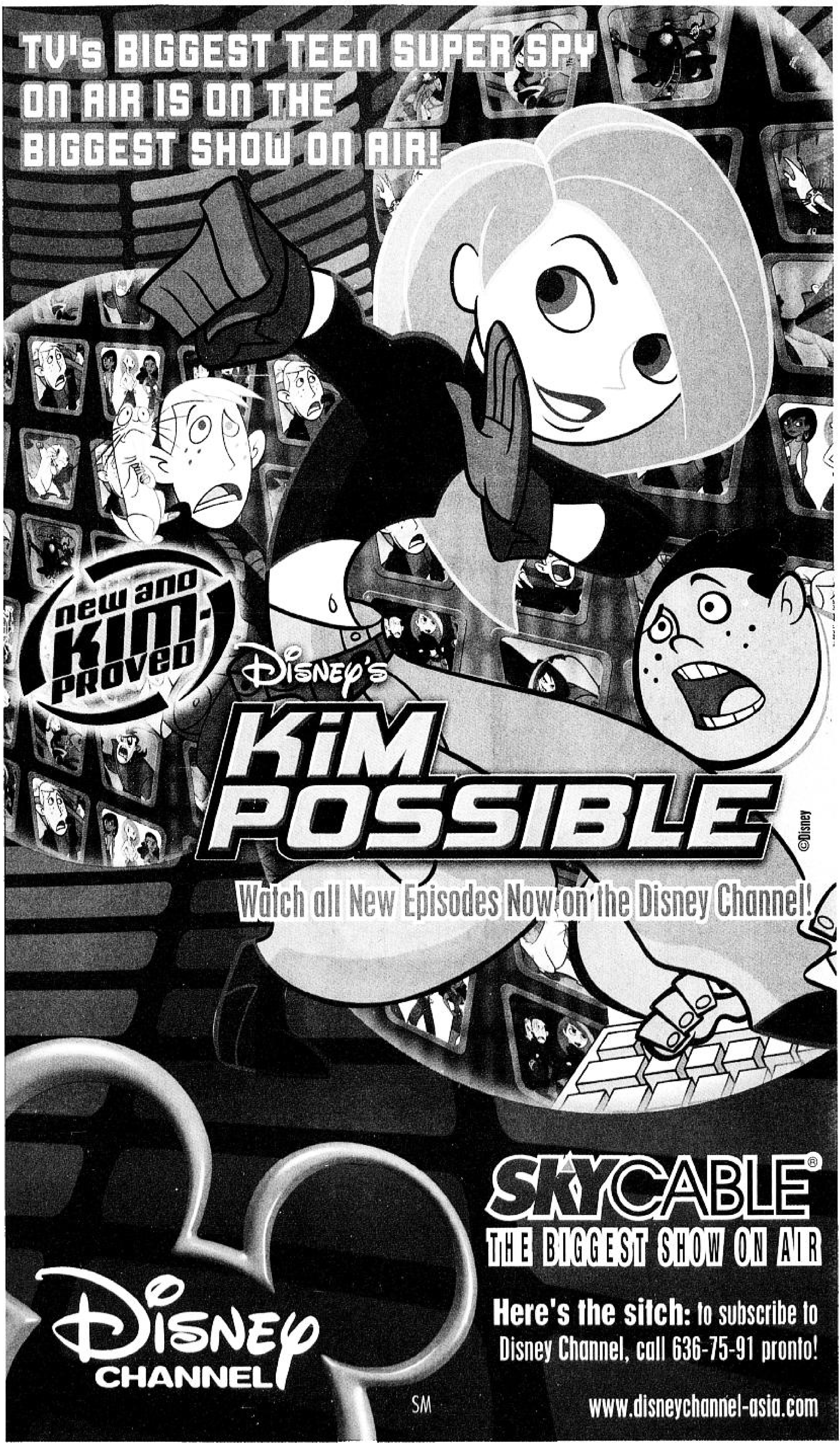
Plus thousands more downloads and services at www.smart.zed.com
SMART Simply Amazing!


TV's BIGGEST TEEN SUPER SPY ON AIR IS ON THE BIGGEST SHOW ON AIR!
new and KIM-PROVED
Disney's KIM POSSIBLE
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Polanski to remake 'Oliver Twist'

PARIS—Oscar-winning director Roman Polanski is to remake the classic Dickens' novel "Oliver Twist" which has already spawned a dozen screen versions since the first attempt in 1912.

Childhood experiences

Polanski, a judge at the Deauville film festival in northern France, told the American Variety magazine that he would make the film in Europe next summer with British actors and a script by Ronald Harwood, who won an Oscar this year for the Polanski film, "The Pianist." Polanski himself picked up a directing Oscar for the film which drew on his childhood experiences as a Polish Jew in a Krakow ghetto.

French producer Robert Benmussa, who co-produced "The Pianist," confirmed that he was joining forces with Polanski again.

"There's been a heap of televised versions of "Oliver Twist," but no film since Carol Reed's 1968 musical comedy and David Lean's 1948 black and white version," Benmussa told AFP.

"Young people today don't know it. And the meeting of the worlds of Dickens and Polanski will be interesting."

Polanski, whose other works include "Chinatown" and "Rosemary's Baby," said that it was his 10- and five-year-old children who gave him the wish to adapt the famous novel.

Band of pickpockets

The book tells the tale of a boy who flees an orphanage and joins a band of young pickpockets led by Fagin, memorably portrayed in the Lean film by Alec Guinness, and in the musical version by Ron Moody.

Polanski finally received the Best Director Oscar he won in March for "The Pianist." US star Harrison Ford, who accepted the award on his friend's behalf at the Academy Awards ceremony in Hollywood, presented Polanski with the golden statuette at a laid-back reception in the fashionable Normandy coastal resort.

Polanski was head of the jury at the 29th Deauville festival — the annual showcase for American cinema in France — while Ford opened the event by introducing his latest movie "Hollywood Homicide," a police action caper.

The director, who turned 70 recently, left his home in the United States in 1977 and is still wanted there on charges of statutory rape, making his appearance at the Oscars ceremony impossible.

True story

"The Pianist," a dark film based on the true story of a Polish Jew who uses his music to survive the Nazis, took home three Oscars this year — Best Director, Best Actor for Adrien Brody, and Best Adapted Screenplay.

POLANSKI. Will direct from a script by Oscar awardee Ronald Harwood.

AFP PHOTO ALAIN JOCARD

Polanski's film also won the coveted Palme d'Or at the Cannes film festival in 2002.

Polanski, born in Paris to parents who soon after returned to their native Poland, was just eight years old when the Nazis took away his parents and he was forced to flee the Jewish ghetto in Krakow. *AFP*

'Star-Struck' strikes less than gold

By Noelani Torre

REALITY TV must be the new catchphrase at GMA-7 nowadays, what with their two newest shows, "Extra Challenge" and "Star-Struck," both ostensibly in that format. The programs are quite different from each other, however. The former is on occasion the Pinoy version of the dating game, and the latter is touted as being an inside look at the trials and travails of the road to stardom.

Goal-oriented

Like most reality shows, "Star-Struck" is a goal-oriented, prize-rewarding show. Its goal is star-making, so at the end of it, there must be finalists —a boy and a girl—who will become stars (if they aren't already, after all that television exposure). The station dubs it as "the first reality-based *artista* search."

Out of hundreds of contestants, a panel of judges narrow down their choices until only 14 are left, seven male and seven female. The pruning will continue until only the winning pair is left. Their prize? P500,000 and P1-million management contracts with GMA. Meanwhile, we get to watch the entire bloody process.

Potential

The concept itself is interesting and it has a lot of potential, as we Pinoys love watching talent competitions. So far, however, the show hasn't been delivering that well.

Part of the problem is the pacing. When they said that we get to watch the entire process, they meant it. We get to watch parts we'd rather fast-forward on. In one episode we viewed, the contestants had been narrowed down to 60—the Circle of 60, to be specific.

The power of reality TV is that it can, by virtue of its being "real-life," easily catch the audience's attention and eventually, induce its sympathy as well. But 60, even 30, is too big a number for that!

Still, it would have been alright, except that the competitors tended to blend in with everybody else. Of course, this could also have been because there weren't any real standouts in the bunch.

Perhaps we're being too impatient. But then again, this is television, where the catchy and snappy rule. After all, you wouldn't want your bored viewer to switch to the other channel, would you?

Honestly, we were expecting better contestants. After all, they did hold auditions, and hundreds reportedly tried out. Even when narrowed down to 60, however, there still seemed to be a good deal of not-so-luminous talents.

Teasers

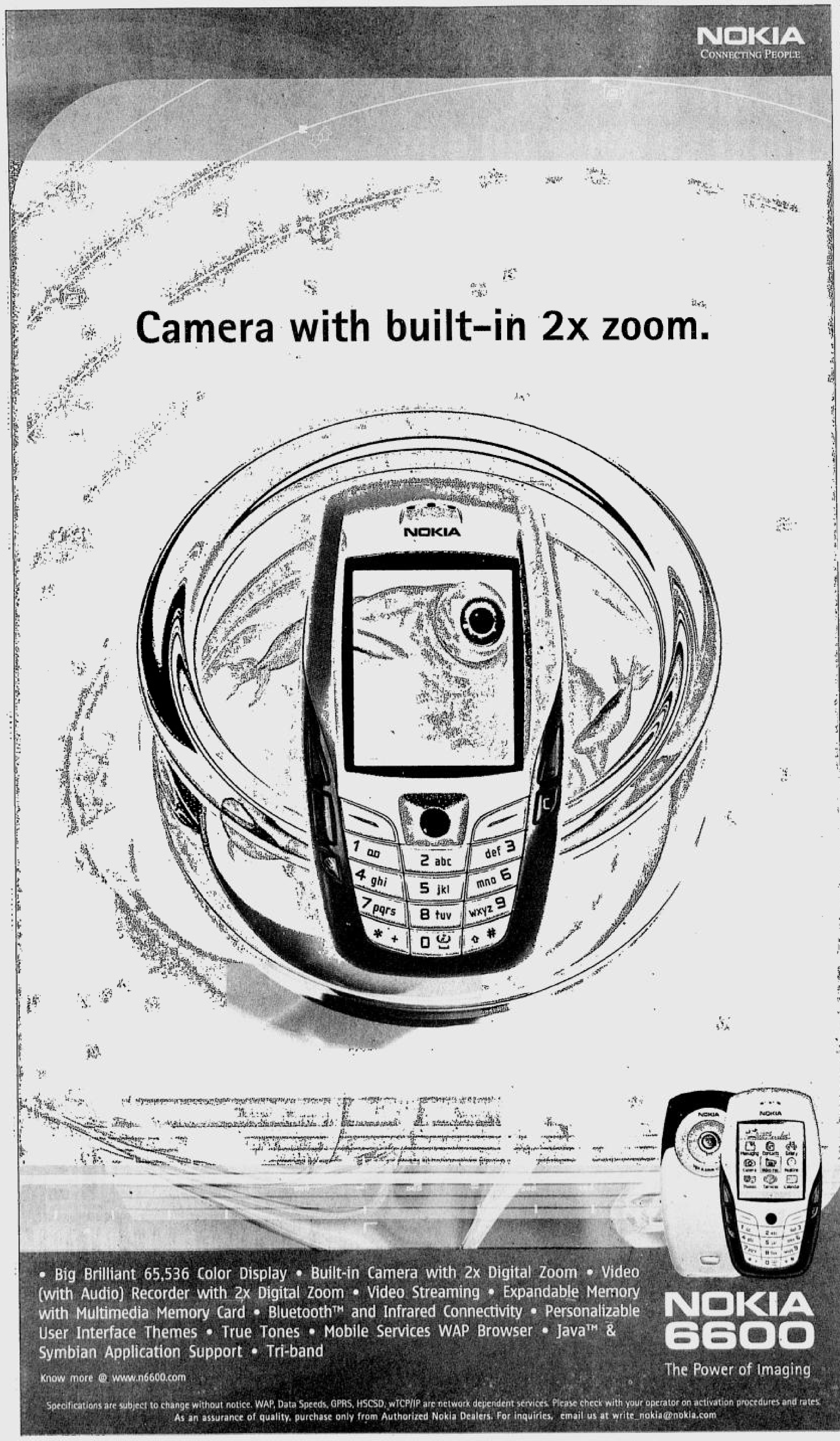
Another gripe: the show is more "telling" than showing thus far. They tell us that it's a hard road to stardom, that it's essential to dream, believe, survive. OK, fine, but what we want is to actually see it happening before us. After a while, all these teasers tend to get repetitious.

"Star-Struck" is hosted by two acknowledged young stars, Dingdong Dantes and Nancy Castiglione, who are doing well enough, though the latter's high voice can be grating at times, and her Filipino definitely needs work.

Following the desultory tradition of local TV, the show thinks up of all sorts of delaying tactics to keep us on tenterhooks, so we'll continue to watch it the next day. Hence, the repetitive slogans, the forays into the lives and homes of established stars, and numerous little speeches form competitors that range from contradictorily timid "*opo*" mouthers to braggadocio.

The end result is the postponement of the important announcement we've been waiting for since the show began—who gets to go on, and who gets to go home.

Of course, this turns us off a little; after all, we did patiently slog through all those long-winded commercials. Still, this system seems to be working—Pinoys love the *abangan ang susunod na kabanata* effect—and with this new take on reality TV, GMA seems poised to get a bite out of the ratings pie.



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SATURDAY *Special*

New musical revives interest in Peter Allen's life and music

ALLEN (right) with ex-wife Liza Minnelli in happier times. AP

NEW YORK—It seems to have been Peter Allen's fate to be overshadowed by other stars.

When he died in 1992—by which time he had scored an Academy Award, recorded 10 albums and starred on Broadway—Allen was still identified in obituaries as the man who had been discovered by Judy Garland and was the first husband of her daughter, Liza Minnelli.

Causing a stir

His songs, too, were hits mostly for other performers: Melissa Manchester with "Don't Cry Out Loud," Olivia Newton-John with "I Honestly Love You." Even "The Boy From Oz," the new Broadway musical about him that has renewed interest in his work, is causing a stir mostly because of the actor playing Allen: Hugh Jackman.

"Peter was never a name," says Carole Bayer Sager, a frequent songwriting collaborator of Allen's. "He didn't have a No. 1 record of his own, and people in the midwest didn't know him. He was kind of a cult figure."

At its peak, though, Allen's cult was huge, at least in New York City. He sold out Radio City Music Hall so often in the early 1980s that he was named the concert hall's official personality. Former New York City mayor Ed Koch once called Allen his favorite entertainer.

Unflagging energy

His performances were distinguished by visual extravagance and Allen's seemingly unflagging energy. At one of his Radio City concerts, he came on stage astride a camel, flanked by a battalion of Rockettes. His costumes were similarly outrageous: all gold lamé, sequins and gaping collars.

"He was very savvy about what his audience wanted to see—great costumes, great pacing," says Ann-Margret, a friend of Allen's who still closes her cabaret shows with a song he wrote for her, "Once Before I Go."

But in contrast to his outgoing performance style, friends remember Allen as an intensely private man who shared little about his personal life, even with those close to him.

Few friends knew he had HIV, for example, until his final days. And he rarely spoke about his childhood, which had been shaded by his father's suicide when Allen was 13.

"He just kept everything inside," says Ann-Margret. His personal philosophy, she says, was, "Don't let on that you're crying, and if you're hurting, don't show anyone."

He expressed those feelings in song with "Don't Cry Out Loud," which he wrote with Sager and recorded for a solo album in 1979. Manchester's version hit in 1978.

"I wasn't writing that song thinking it was about Peter, but in retrospect, it does echo his personality," Sager says. "He didn't believe in crying on anyone's shoulder."

Childhood

Allen had wanted to be a performer since his childhood in rural Australia. Born Peter Woolnough in 1944, he was performing in bars by the time he was 12, playing piano and mimicking the rock 'n' roll moves of Little Richard and Jerry Lee Lewis.

In the 1960s, he partnered with another local boy—Chris Bell—to form an act called the Allen Brothers. The act was managed by Bell's father, who booked them on concert tours of Australia and Asia.

Garland caught the Allen Brothers in 1964 in Hong Kong, where she was also performing. The Associated Press reported then that an enraptured Garland could be heard yelling, "Marvelous!" as she watched the show, and afterward introduced herself to Bell and Allen.

She took the two under her wing, becoming their manager and booking them as the opening act for the concerts she gave in Britain and the United States.

"Peter hit all those places that touched her," says cabaret singer Julie Wilson, who knew Allen and Garland through a vocal coach the three shared (Wilson also starred in Allen's 1988 Broadway flop, "Legs Diamond"). "He had the heart, the energy—the same magical things she had."

Garland also introduced Allen to her daughter, Minnelli. The two married in 1967, although by then Allen had already begun to have affairs with men. One such tryst, recounted in "The Boy From Oz," apparently got the Allen Brothers fired from a gig in Australia in the early 1960s.

Set-up marriage

"I believe that Peter did love Liza and there was a relationship there," says Sager. "I don't know how long it stayed sexual, but I don't believe it was a set-up marriage from day one."

He and Minnelli separated in 1970. In the same year, he cut off his professional relationship with Bell to pursue a solo career, writing songs with Sager, lyricist Dean Pitchford and others.

"I watched him evolve as a performer. He was shy at the beginning, but then, all of a sudden, his shoulder was leaning in, then one leg would go up on the piano. By the time he hit Radio City, he was on top of the piano," Sager says with a laugh.

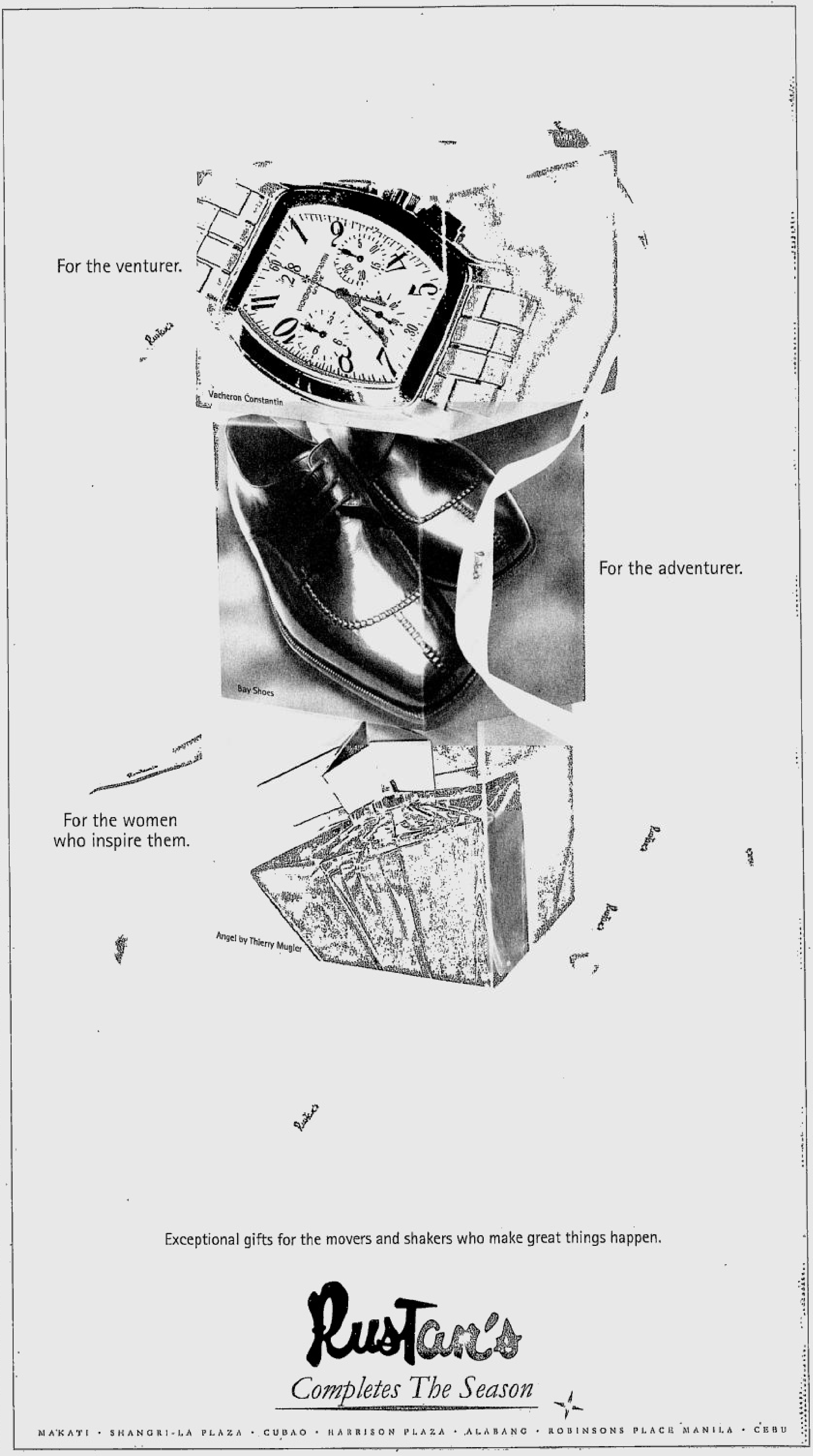
In 1972, Allen began a long-term relationship with Gregory Connell, a model from Texas who was six years his junior. Connell eventually became Allen's lighting director and stage manager. Their relationship was close but limited by Allen's professional commitments and outside affairs, friends say.

"They were fun and easy together, but they had a tough relationship, too," says Bruce Cudd, Allen's personal assistant. "Peter was not monogamous at all, and it was up and down."

Final days

When Connell was diagnosed with HIV in the early 1980s, Allen tried to arrange his performance schedule so he could be with Connell

FLASHY/ H2



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SANTOS (LEFT)AND CABANGON. Featured in the 14-track album.

'TUNOG ACOUSTIC'

Solid collection of mellow favorites

By Noelani Torre

PAOLO Santos, Nina, Noel Cabangon, True Faith—these are only four of the artists featured in the 14-track "Tunog Acoustic" (Warner Music). A compilation of local hits, the CD is distinctive because the songs are acoustic.

Unplugged interpretations

We've always been partial to unplugged interpretations. They tend to be clear and refreshing (and a good way to test whether the artist does, indeed, have talent). "Tunog Acoustic" is music at its most polished—pared down to essentials, but neither rough nor amateurish.

With its generally mellow mood and the relaxing quality of the selections, "Tunog Acoustic" is perfect for lazy afternoons, or for winding down after work. The romantic flavor of most of the songs also makes this an ideal choice for quiet evenings with significant others.

The CD kicks off with Paolo Santos' take on Peter Mayer's "Moonlight Over Paris." This gentle, whimsical ballad is a favorite of romantics and non-romantics alike and has been enjoying long hours of airtime on local radio.

Santos, who's just released his first album, "Playlist," is known for his simple yet engaging renditions. His interpretation of Mayer's "Moonlight" retains the flavor of the original, but he adds his own brand of charm through his ever-present guitar.

Hit love song

Another recent sensation, Nina, follows the guitar-toting Santos with her hit love song, "Jealous." The soft-voiced would-be diva is quietly alluring in this frequently played song. Her voice isn't that distinctive, though, unlike that of Freestyle's Jinky Vidal and Kitchie Nadal, who also contribute to this selection.

Vidal's husky croon is familiar and relaxing in one of Freestyle's most popular songs, "So Slow." This track is a classic, as are Noel Cabangon/Buklod's "Kanlungan," I Axe's "Ako'y sa Iyo, Ika'y sa Akin," Side A's "Forevermore," Barbie's Cradle's "Tabing Ilog," and True Faith's "Huwag Na Lang Kaya."

In truth, we're getting a little tired of "Kanlungan" (not that there's anything wrong with the song). It's only that when McDonald's used it in its television ad, many people suddenly rediscovered the song. Now, it's playing practically every five minutes. But the song remains one of a few sentimental tunes that are neither corny nor too sweet.

"Ako'y sa Iyo, Ika'y sa Akin" is a love song that doesn't say anything particularly new, but it's straightforward and has a good, solid melody that is as memorable as it is appealing.

Wedding staple

"Forevermore" has become a wedding staple, which isn't surprising as it's one of those love songs that are made to last longer than the next weekly countdown. It contains Side A's trademark romanticism and fine tenor notes.

"Tabing Ilog" is signature Barbie's Cradle—gentle and ruminative. The song has gained fame, however, not through radio but through television, as it is the theme song of, you guessed it, that "Dawson's Creek" wannabe, "Tabing Ilog."

True Faith's "Huwag Na Lang Kaya" is the song for *torpes*, as the title might suggest, and it still amuses us as it did when we first heard it. The song, with its softly bouncing rhythm and sheepish air, has always been unique, despite the proliferation of songs with similar sentiments.

CD-ender "Run" is probably the most distinctive song in this collection, if only for its faint rock undertones and the unmistakable voice of former Mojofly lead, Kitchie Nadal. Her voice is softer than usual in this song, but it retains its punch and vigor. Nadal still reminds us of '70s rock star Sampaguita.

"Tunog Acoustic" is a solid collection of mellow favorites that will have you putting your feet up, but not nodding off to sleep. You can hardly go wrong with this one.

JACKMAN. Acclaimed for his portrayal of the HIV-stricken musician. AP

Flashy . . .

From page H1

during his final days, says Connell's mother, Mary Jane Edwards.

"He was with him in the hospital and when it came time to leave the hospital, they went home," she says. "But he didn't cancel any shows. After Greg died, he had a show four days later—Greg would have wanted him to go on." Connell died in their shared house in Leucadia, California, in 1984.

Allen's dedication to his career paid off. "I Honestly Love You" and "Don't Cry Out Loud" were major hits for Newton-John and Manchester, giving him a steady income from songwriting royalties. The biggest hit he had on his own, "I Go to Rio," went to No. 1 in France and Australia, but had little chart impact in the United States.

64 performances

Allen starred in "Legs Diamond" and wrote the lyrics and music. It closed after weeks of previews and only 64 regular performances.

"It was so ill-conceived that it was unfixable, really," says Sager, who saw the show in previews.

But the scathing notices inspired a memorable example of Allen's humor, recalls Wilson, who played a nightclub singer in the show.

"There was a scene where he rises up in a coffin. And at one show after the reviews came out, he sits up and says, 'Even the critics can't kill me.' The audience just howled."

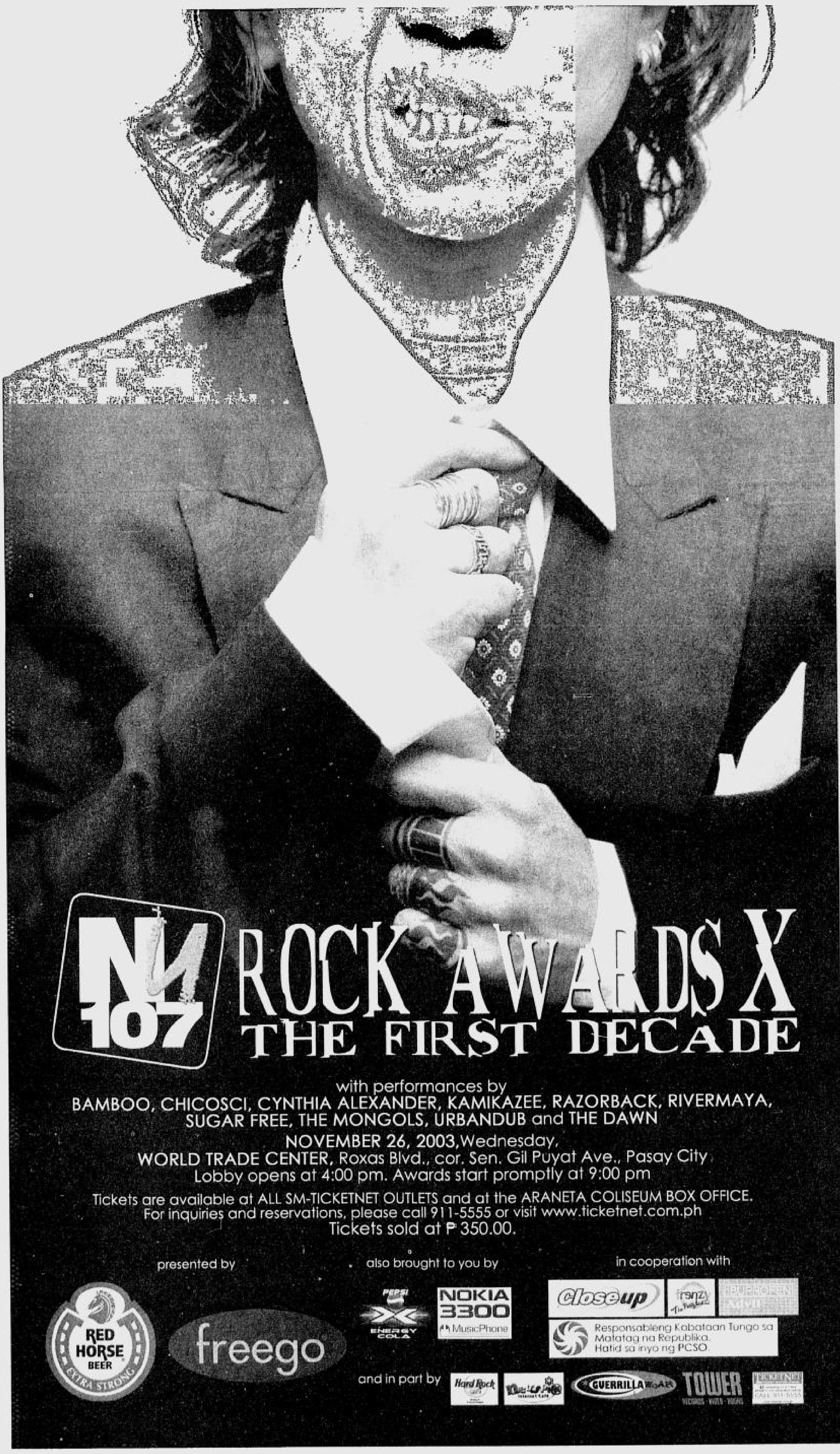
Privately, though, Allen was smarting from the show's failure.

Allen was diagnosed with HIV at about the same time "Legs" closed, and—as always—he coped with the bad news mostly internally.

"I knew something was wrong—I knew he was having throat problems—but Peter was private," says actress-singer Ellen Greene, who befriended Allen on the New York cabaret circuit in the 1970s.

He never made a public announcement that he had HIV, fearing audiences wouldn't want to see a performer they knew was sick. He may also have feared alienating conservative, heterosexual fans: Allen didn't pretend to be straight after divorcing Minnelli, but he never publicly came out as gay, either. He died in 1992 at the age of 48.

Whatever his private thoughts, Allen kept his spirits high with friends. He spent his last days in Leucadia, in the same house where Connell had died. *AP*



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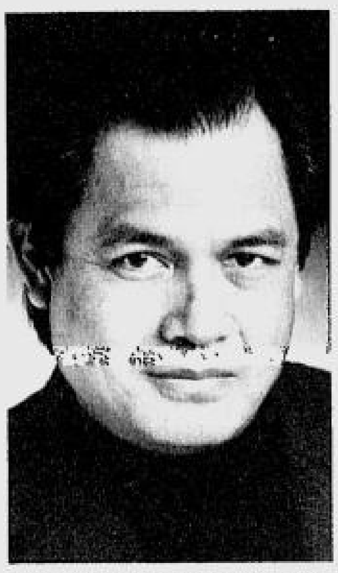
A Filipino actor on American TV

By Behn Cervantes



VELASCO. Has snagged feature roles in "Star Trek," "Jag" and "Simon and Simon."

WHEN I read in the Upsilon Sigma Phi net that old chum Vladimir Velasco was featured in the ninth season of the American television series, "Jag," I was pleased. Mainstream television is highly competitive, and rarely are Asians able to land a respectable role there. It is even more difficult for Filipinos because, generally in the United States, when they refer to Asians, they mean Chinese, Japanese, Korean and now Vietnamese. Americans do not have a clear image of Filipinos.

Theater scene

Vlad was active in the Upsilon's stage productions, appearing in such plays as "Mr. Roberts" prior to his entry into the Manila theater scene, where he worked with groups like the Manila Theater Guild.

In that once premier theater group, he appeared in "The Fantasticks" as The Mute. He also recalls the early and experimental works of Rolando Tinio and Joey Gosiengfiao in the '60s.

After relative success in the capital, he enrolled in the theater program of the University of Montana and the University of Hawaii. In the Manoa Valley campus, he also became a proficient dancer, appearing in the Honolulu musical extravaganza, "Paradise Found," which ran for three years.

Actor-dancer

The well-built actor-dancer passed for the multi-racial people of multi-ethnic Hawaii, so he was chosen as the photographic model for the reputable high-end store, Liberty House. He also became the house model of Bloomingdale's. "You gotta make a living," Vlad half-mockingly states.

When he moved to Los Angeles, he took further training in acting, voice and jazz. He prepared himself seriously for the competitive arena of American entertainment.

He snagged featured roles in shows like "Star Trek" and "Simon and Simon." In both series, he portrayed a Chinese character. He was likewise cast in East-West Players' productions that included "A Chorus Line," where he alternately played the Director and the Dance Captain.

But it was in "Jag" that he was able to play a Filipino. "But, I portrayed a crooked politician!," Vlad rues.

While having dinner with Vlad in an upscale restaurant in Los Angeles prior to my trip back to Manila, I egged him on to drop names. Well, he played key scenes with James Shigeta, David Soul and the late Rock Hudson. "Rock Hudson?," I asked. "Yes, in his last appearance in 'World War III.' "He was already like this," Vlad sucked in his cheeks to show that the erstwhile macho matinee idol was already sick with AIDS.

Few and far between

Since good roles for Asians come few and far between, Vlad has worked for an airline company for the past 20 years, while acting on the side. Next year, however, he will opt for early retirement to concentrate on his acting career onstage, as well as on television and in the movies.

Fortunately, his diligence and many years of residence in the United States have rid him of a Filipino accent. He can affect various accents for different nationalities.

I suggested that, the next time he came for a Philippine visit, he should also make his presence felt in Manila. "That isn't a bad idea," Vlad agreed.

Time to outgrow our obsession with gossip

By Nestor U. Torre

MUCH of local entertainment reportage focuses on gossip because media people generally believe that readers and viewers love being told about stars' nasty secrets and sordid personal lives.

Off the screen

In other film cultures, however, viewers' attitudes have developed so much that they don't give a hoot what stars do off the screen. All they expect from screen luminaries is a good performance, and that's that.

We hope that, sooner than later, local viewers will get similarly enlightened. Because our fascination with gossip is one reason why our audience hasn't matured enough to expect and demand better movies from our producers.

This in turn allows our filmmakers to remain lazy and exploitative in their work.

It's a sign of immaturity when viewers can't distinguish between the actor and his screen performance. Gossip exacerbates this because it makes the person of the star the audience's main focus, instead of the quality of his work.

Perception

Thus, to improve and develop their perception, viewers must consciously wean themselves away from an inordinate and even obsessive interest in stars' personal lives, and concentrate instead on determining how well movie actors meet standards for superior screen performances.

Seen in this new light, some big stars will be exposed as bad, predictable and lazy actors, while lesser stars can be rediscovered as excellent thespians.

The hope is that, with this new set of screen values and standards, better performances can result in better films, that will be rewarded with the more informed audience's grateful personage.

This will also free viewers from the manipulative ploys of producers, who believe they have the power to create artificial needs for the audience, and to make stars out of undeserving non-talents.

So, if you don't like being manipulated by producers, make a conscious effort to resist the cheap and salacious blandishments of gossip, which film people sometimes use to make stars more controversial, and therefore, more newsworthy and popular.

A third advantage of rising above gossip is being liberated from the cynical tendency of gloating over other people's miseries.

Downbeat logic

The downbeat logic goes this way: Stars are supposed to be pluperfect people who are much better off than us "ordinary" mortals. When the skeletons in their fetid closets are exposed, we are given "permission" to look down on them for a change, so we enjoy the cynical seduction of gossip that makes those sordid stellar secrets public.

We may find perverse pleasure in gloating, but we're the real losers in the long run, because we are habituating ourselves to kneejerk bitchiness and cynicism. It would be much more positive and productive if we would instead focus on improving our own lives and prospects, and let stars' private lives go hang!

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'Crying Ladies' director talks about his first film

MEILY. Studied moviemaking in France.

By Rica Arevalo

MARK Meily, 36, is directing his first full-length film "Crying Ladies," starring Sharon Cuneta, to be shown next month at the Metro Manila Film Festival.

Questions

Meily answered our questions before he recently flew to Thailand for the Dolby Digital mixing and encoding of his film. Q and A:

How did you start directing?

I wanted to be an animator. When I transferred from pre-med to fine arts at UP, animation was offered as an elective only to seniors. So when Mowelfund Film Institute offered a filmmaking workshop, I took it because they promised to "cover" animation as part of the course.

I enjoyed the workshop a lot and I realized that my true calling was to direct people, not drawings. I made several short films on super eight and I joined the CCP Alternative Film and Video Competition where I won awards.

CUNETA. Demonstrates her range in her new starrer.

I was introduced to Robert Malengreau, founder of the Brussels Festival of Independent Cinema. He invited me to Belgium to screen my short films. I was so fascinated with Europe that I vowed to go back.

Were you successful?

Yes! When I returned to Manila, I went to all the European embassies to inquire about scholarships.

Simple requirement

The French embassy wrote me after two months telling me that there was a scholarship for film in Paris with one simple requirement—I had to speak French fluently. I didn't, but I told them that I was learning. *Palakasan lang ng loob.* I think I was the only one who applied because many filmmakers didn't speak French.

The embassy sent me to France after three weeks. First, I went to Vichy to study French at the Centre Audio Visuel de Langues Modernes, then I went to Paris to study at the Ecole Superieure d'Etudes Cinematographiques. The school is famous because of its distinguished alumni, including the cinematographer of "Amelie." I learned so much just by being in France.

When I came home, Amar Gambol, one of the movers of Philippine advertising, invited me to direct TV commercials for his production house, Electromedia. Since 1991, I have been directing TV commercials.

What made you write "Bayad Luha?"

I have always been fascinated by rituals, and about the tradition of hiring professional mourners, which turns out to be a universal practice.

Lead character

During a screenwriting workshop I attended, the profession of the lead character was emphasized. So, I decided to make my lead character a funeral crier.

What are your good and bad experiences in the local film industry?

One great advantage in shooting my first film, "Crying Ladies," is that I worked with the same production team I worked with shooting commercials. They treated the production as if we were shooting a long TV commercial. We did storyboards, took shots of the locations according to how we would angle them.

TV commercials

We had set and costume designs before we shot anything. Doing TV commercials is the best film school any director can have.

Describe your working relationship with your actors.

Initially, I was star-struck. It was beyond my dreams that somebody like Sharon Cuneta, the Megastar, would agree to do a film with a first-time director. Add the original Ligaya Paraiso to that, Ms Hilda Koronel. These people are screen legends!

So, during the story conference, I prepared a powerpoint presentation of the story, complete with a fictionalized biography, acting references, eneagram colors, etc., so that even before the shoot, they knew who they were in the film.

What is your advice to aspiring directors?

Itigil na ang pa-angst, it's so '80s. Learn to write. Producers are always looking for fresh ideas in whatever genre. It's best if you can show them a script. The script is like a business pian.

Why should we watch "Crying Ladies"?

It's a heart-warming comedy. The film is unique because you see a different Sharon Cuneta. Viewers will realize that her "range" is far greater than they thought.

Cliché characters

"Crying Ladies" does not have the usual cliché characters doing a monologue in public, *walang sampalan, walang* song and dance or poetic narration.

What is your goal in the future?

In my Film History class in France, my professor said then that in Asia, there were only three countries that had a dynamic film industry, and an audience who has appreciation for good films—Japan, India and the Philippines.

Now we add Korea, Iran, China and Thailand—and the Philippines is out of the list. My dream is for my country to be put back on that list. I hope that more Filipino films will become regulars at Cannes, Venice and Berlin.

REDFORD. Megs film version of Neil Gordonof's novel.

Redford directs new romantic thriller

LOS ANGELES—Robert Redford has been tapped to direct and produce a new romantic thriller, "The Company You Keep," for 20th Century Fox.

Redford, 66, will make the movie, based on Neil Gordonof's novel.

Militant past

"The Company You Keep" tells the story of a respectable lawyer whose militant past comes back to haunt him, forcing him to go on the run in a bid to prove his innocence of a serious crime.

In a statement, Redford said the story was "a contemporary look at the past—the misguided choices of youth, the challenges of love and conviction—and how they all collide in the present." Daily Variety said the movie's screenplay would be crafted by Lem Dobbs, who wrote the "The Score" and "The Limey."

Redford has starred in generational classics, including "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" in 1969, "The Sting" in 1973 and the 1976 Watergate drama, "All The President's Men."

In 1981, he launched his Sundance Film Festival to give young and unknown filmmakers, traditionally snubbed by Hollywood's major studios and distributors, a chance to show off and sell their movies. *AFP*

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FEDERICO FELLINI

Master of the bizarre and comic

By Peter Shard

PARIS—In his lifetime, Federico Fellini was the most famous and influential Italian, if not European, film director of his day.

Golden era

His star may have waned a little in the latter years of his life from the golden era of the 1960s and 1970s when films like "La Dolce Vita," "Otto e mesa" (8 1/2), "Roma" and "Satyricon" achieved the rare distinction of combining critical and commercial success.

And it is true that by the time he died at the age of 73 —the day after his 50th wedding anniversary—he had long since descended into self-parody and had all but given up filmmaking entirely, his last work, the whimsical "La Voce della Luna" (Voice of the Moon), having been released (to muted praise) three years earlier.

But at his height, Fellini created a bizarre world of his own which could only be described by the adjective Fellini-esque, populated as it was by the comic and the grotesque and often entirely devoid of narrative drive.

Criticism

As if to divert criticism of the often oblique content of films like "Satyricon" and "Roma," he was fond of stating: "My films are not for understanding. They are for seeing."

Yet, although he was an avowed humanist, there was frequently a more mystic vein running through his work, as if his autobiographical approach to film was an instrument of his quest for himself.

What emerges from his films is a man both attracted to and frightened by women, with a strong sense of the absurd and the fantastic and a love of circus and vaudeville, all of which had their roots in his boyhood and adolescence in the Adriatic resort of Rimini.

He grew up in an Italy dominated by the autocratic Fascist regime of Mussolini and the austere figure of Pope Pius XII.

Neo-realist

But while his career grew out of the Italian neo-realist movement of the 1940s, he was never confined by the depiction of the harsher realities of hardship and poverty epitomized by Vittorio da Sica, the earlier work of Luchino Visconti and, in particular, his friend Roberto Rossellini—with whom he collaborated on "Roma, Citta Aperta" (Rome, Open City) and "Paisan."

Almost inevitably, his first feature, "Luci dei Varieta" (Variety Lights), co-directed with Alberto Lattuada, drew on vaudeville, while his second "Lo Sciecco Bianco" (The White Sheik) revolved around another of his passions, comic book heroes.

Circus strongman

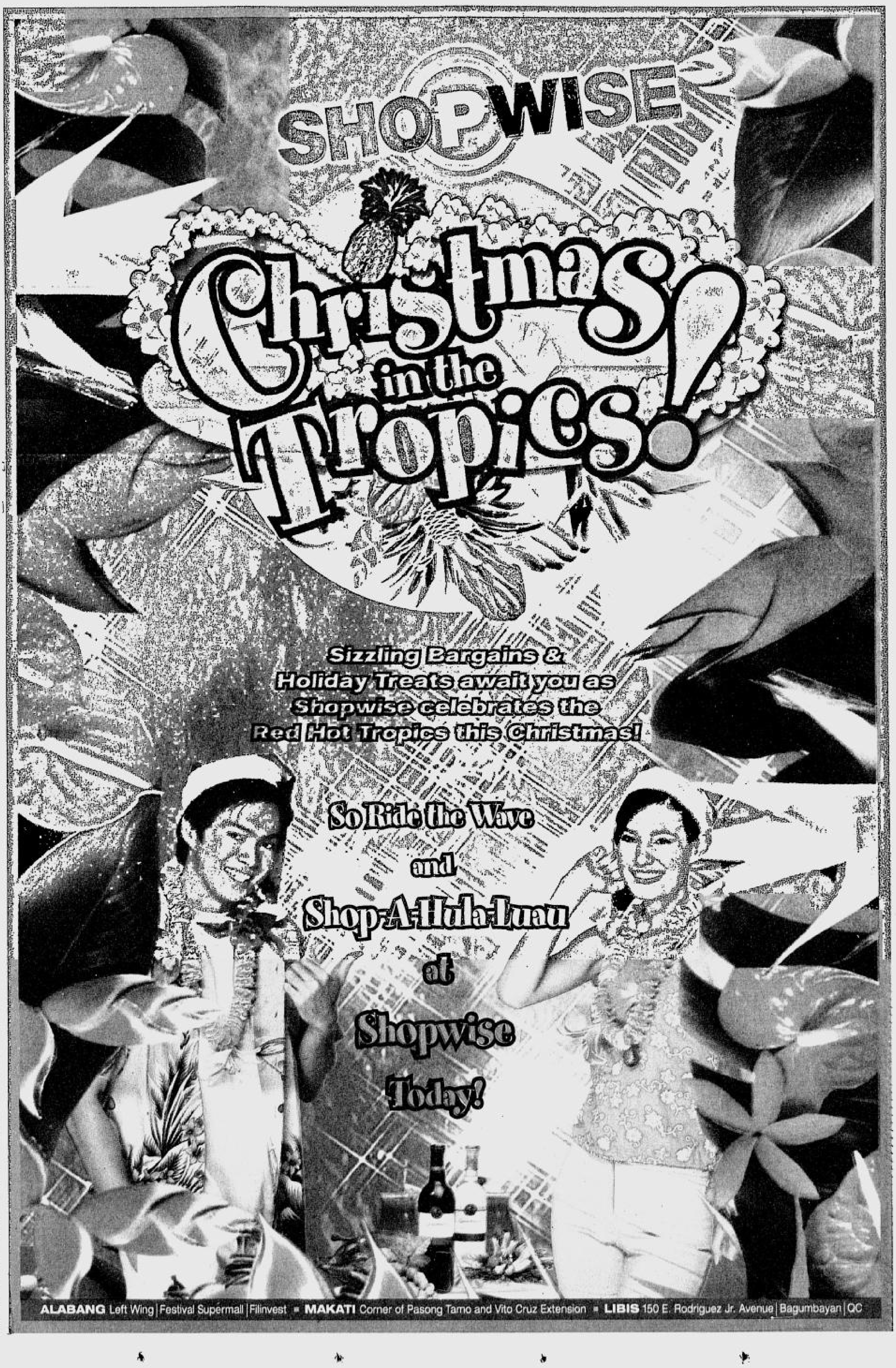
Having drawn on his own middle-class provincial background for "I Vitelloni" (The Young and the Passionate), Fellini achieved his first true masterpiece in the highly symbolic "La Strada," in which a brutal circus strongman (Anthony Quinn) mistreats a simple-minded girl, played by Fellini's wife of half-a-century, Giulietta Masina.

But after "La Dolce Vita," his classic sideswipe at the vacuous decadence of Italian society for which he was vilified at the Milan premiere in 1960, Fellini finally seemed to break free of neo-realism altogether and, in the economic boom of the 1960s, his films became grandiose and portentious (if often plotless) pageants.

It has to be remembered, though, that "La Dolce Vita" was perhaps the most influential of all his films: it launched Marcello Mastroianni worldwide for the celebrated scene in which Anita Ekberg walks barefoot in Rome's Trevi fountain and introduced a new

MASTER/ I2

FELLINI. His films achieved the rare distinction of combining critical and commercial success.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Fukuoka festival screens outstanding Filipino films

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ACCLAIMED screenwriter and film scholar Clodualdo "Doy" del Mundo delivered a lecture on Philippine Cinema and Culture last week, in conjunction with the Philippine Film Festival in Fukuoka City, Japan, from Nov. 1 to 16.

The films being shown are "Tunay na Ina" by Octavio Silos, "Anak Dalita" by Lamberto V. Avellana, "Nunal sa Tubig" by Ishmael Bernal, "Sister Stella L" by Mike de Leon, "Jose Rizal" by Marilou Diaz-Abaya, "Noli Me Tangere" by Gerardo de Leon, "The Flor Contemplacion Story" by Joel Lamangan," "Turumba" by Kidlat Tahimik, "Pasan Ko ang Daigdig" and "Insiang" by Lino Brocka, and "Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos" by Mario O'Hara.

The screenings are being held at the Fukuoka City Public Library Movie Hall. The Fukuoka Library has its own archive, and it includes a growing collection of Asian films. The 12 films being shown during the Philippine Film Festival are part of the library's collection.

Last Nov. 9, Doy's monograph on Philippines cinema was launched at the festival.

'Mystic River'

Clint Eastwood's latest directorial effort, "Mystic River," is expected to figure strongly in the Oscar race for 2003. Eastwood says he optioned Dennis Lehane's bestselling novel immediately after reading it because he found the story riveting, and its characters "complex, interesting and well-defined."

"Mystic River" traces the interwoven history of three men, the terrible events that tainted their boyhood and shaped their futures, and the difficult choices they are forced to make.

The film is a murder mystery, but it's not just about solving the crime: it goes on to show how all of the participants' lives have been altered by the crime.

Eastwood's movie stars Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon, Tim Robbins, Laurence Fishburne, Laura Linney and Marcia Gay Hayden.

Grand finals

Seven finalists will compete for the top prize in Band Breakout 2003 at 8 p.m. on Nov. 15 at Baluarte de Santa Isabel in Intramuros. They are Black Coffee, Highbean, Kjwan, 9th Avenue, Silent Sanctuary, Splitcide and Willowy. The competition is being held by Monster radio RX 93.1

'Hunchback of Notre Dame'

Philippine Ballet Theater is currently presenting the Asian premiere of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," restaged at the CCP Main Theater by PBT's ballet master Anatoli Panassiokov, based on Vladimir Burmeister's choreography.

Remaining performances are at 3 and 8 p.m. today, and at 3 p.m. on Nov. 15. Call 632-8848.

"MYSTIC RIVER." Expected to figure strongly in the Oscar race next year.

DEL MUNDO. Lectured on Philippine Cinema and Culture in Japan.

'Looney Tunes: Back in Action'

Warner Bros. will hold the invitational gala premiere of its live-action adventure comedy, "Looney Tunes: Back in Action" tonight at SM Megamall. In the film, the Looney Tunes cartoon characters embark on a hilarious adventure that takes them around the globe in search of Brendan Fraser's missing father and the mythical Blue Monkey diamond. The film starts its regular run here on Nov. 26.

'Pagbibinyag' repeats at CLSU

Amelia Lapeña Bonifacio' "Pagbibinyag Sa Apoy at Dugo," as Central Luzon State University College of Arts and Sciences production will have its first set of re-runs on Nov. 21 and 22 at 7 p.m. at the College of Arts and Sciences Little Theater. There will also be a Nov. 22 matinee performance at 2 p.m.

Behn Cervantes directs this historical drama based on an *ilustrado* family's involvement in the Katipunan and the 1898 revolution of the Filipino people against colonial Spain. Dr. Fulgencio Soriano translated the original "Walking Canes and Fans" into Filipino for this production.

Heading the faculty-student cast are Adelina Soriano, Aida Serna, Malu Abon, Marj Manlulu, Ryan Santos, Benjie Garcia, Tuts Mercado, Paul Macadangdang, Aubrey Rillon, Ponti Abella and Kaloy Agulto.

"PAGBIBINYAG SA APOY AT DUGO." First set of reruns on Nov. 21 and 22.

Movies on TV

On HBO, Nov. 15 at 4 p.m., "Sleepless in Seattle." 2:45 a.m., "Avril Lavigne: Try and Shut Me Up Tour 2003." Nov. 16 at 9 a.m., "The Browning Version." 2:15 p.m., "Devil in a Blue Dress." Nov. 17 at 12 noon, "Glory."

Nov. 18 at 12:45 p.m., "The Tailor of Panama." 8:30 p.m., "Cats and Dogs." Nov. 19 at 5:30 p.m., "Save the Last Dance." 2 a.m., "The Masque of the Red Death." Nov. 20 at 8 a.m., "Conspiracy." Nov. 21 at 3:30 p.m., "The River." 9 p.m., "HBO Hollywood Super Pets."

On Cinemax, Nov. 15 at 6 p.m., "Hitler: The Rise of Evil, Part 1." 7:30 p.m., Part 2. Nov. 16 at 12 noon, "Muriel's Wedding." 6:45 p.m., "Born on the Fourth of July." Nov. 17 at 9 p.m., "The Day the World Ended." 3:30 p.m., "The Bonfire of the Vanities." 9 p.m., "Do the Right Thing."

Nov. 18 at 4 p.m., "Mackenna's Gold." 6:15 p.m., "Hitler and I: Reflections on Evil." 9 p.m., "Tequila Sunrise." Nov. 19 at 7:45 a.m., "Vertigo." Nov. 20 at 1:45 a.m., "The Eiger Sanction." Nov. 21 at 9 a.m., "The Birds."

AM/FM

Interactive advice program on RX 93.1 keeps listeners' late-night hours eventful

By Rito P. Asilo

DIDO'S "White Flag" was on the air when we switched on the car radio on our way home from work. Her rich vocals and the smartly written lyrics of her songs fascinated us long before she collaborated with Eminem.

Catchy songs

The song was played on "Late Night Clinic," RX 93.1's show on the FM band, hosted by DJ Tom Alvarez, who smartly peppers his show's interactive advice format with very catchy, non-sleep-inducing songs, like Toto's "Georgy Porgy" and Tamia's remixed version of "Officially Missing You."

We would have switched the radio off when we got home after midnight, but the situation of the "lovesick" woman caller fascinated us—she was sharing her well-kept secret with Alvarez and his listeners, and urgently asking for advice.

In a hushed, embarrassed tone, the distraught caller shared that she had been carrying on an adulterous affair with a married man for nine years. She loved the guy, but she wanted out of the messy arrangement. The problem was, he kept coming back and she found it hard to drive him away, because she was torn between guilt and her love for him.

Suggestions

For more than an hour, we listened to different suggestions dished out by Alvarez' callers—from the practical (focus on your job, watch movies, etc.) to the righteous ("You're being immoral," "You're a sinner in the eyes of God").

Sure, we hear similar stories all the time—on TV soaps and local sudsy movies—but stories about real people are never trite, and we were hooked. While none of the suggestions seemed specific enough, they gave the caller options to start fixing her messy life.

We think that the show's song-and-share format helped ease the tension and clamped down on too much emotionalizing.

We thought songs with overwrought emotions, like "Ocean Deep," would provoke fiery remarks. When the callers spoke up, however, they sounded quite objective, except for a few who lectured the woman about the "moral and social" implications of her situation.

Empathetic lecture

And we couldn't help but chuckle after listening to a fervent lecture on morality from a listener. When Alvarez cut him off and asked if he wanted to greet his friends on the air, he enumerated names, greeted his dog and cat (in that order), and said, "Hello *din sa aking* mother, who's already slipping." Poor thing, we hoped she was fine after that "slip!"

Unlike most advice show hosts, Alvarez maintained his objectivity by refraining from commenting on his caller's problem. He clarified some suggestions, but other than that, he left the spirited comments to his listeners.

Master of the bizarre and comic

From page 11

word to the language, paparazzi, after Mastroianni's shallow journalist hero Paparazzo.

Best movie

After what is widely regarded as his best movie, "Otto e mesa" (8 1/2), he shot his first film in color, the magnificent "Giulietta degli Spiriti," which contains one of the most accomplished scenes in cinematic history, as the heroine, again played by Masina, recalls her schooldays and the cruelty of the nuns who taught her.

With "Satyricon" and the later "Roma," his taste for the absurd and the grotesque was even more marked, and his elegaic memoir, "Amarcord," set once more in Rimini, marked his last widely-acclaimed picture—his cold, heartless Casanova only finding real appreciation in Japan.

But despite his decline, his legacy remains intact in his abiding influence on latter-day directors, not least Roberto Benigni, who shares his sense of the strange.

Among the golden generation of Italian directors, Visconti may have had a greater sense of spectacle, Antonioni been more personal and intellectual, Pasolini a more acerbic social commentator and Rossellini and Ermanno Olmi truer to the gritty realism of everyday life.

But Fellini managed to encompass all those traits and more in a particularly individual vision of the world. And that is why he will always be considered a cinematic genius.

AFP

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM NOV 15 - NOV 21

CH	2	4	5	7	9	13	23	19	[illegible]
[illegible]	6:00 Star in A Million 6:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 8:30 Home Along da Airport 9:30 Buttercup 10:30 Kontrobersyal 11:30 "F" 12:00 Sports Unlimited	7:00 Yan Ang Pinoy 8:00 The Working President 9:00 To be Announced	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Mirror, Mirror 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 Go For Gold	6:00 Search for a Star 7:00 Imbestigador 8:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 9:30 Kakabakaba Adventures 10:30 Celebrity Turns 12:00 Master Showman	6:00 Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo 7:00 7 Days 8:00 John Doe 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse 11:00 PGMA	5:00 PBA Provincial Game 7:00 Kitscelera 8:00 Amazing Twins 9:00 BYK 101 10:00 Travel 10:30 Global Family Series 11:00 Iyo ang Katarungan	6:00 Baywatch 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 The Amazing Race 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	5:30 CBS Evening News 6:00 E! News Weekend 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On
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[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Next Level Na, Game K N B? 7:00 Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 8:30 Darating Ang Umaga 9:00 Bida Si Mister, Bida Si Misis 11:00 Insider 11:30 The Correspondents	6:00 Concert at the Park 7:00 Strangebrew 7:30 In the Raw 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 Family Rosary Crusade 11:00 Auto Focus	6:00 F 6:30 Balitang-Balita 7:00 Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 That 70s Show 9:00 On Air 9:30 Misadventures of Maverick and Ariel 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Mad TV	6:15 Frontpage 7:00 Extra Challenge 7:30 Starstruck 8:10 Twin Hearts 8:50 Narito Ang Puso Ko 9:30 Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita 11:00 Saksi 11:30 I-Witness	6:00 Invader Zim 6:30 Entertainment Tonight 7:00 Just for Laffs 8:00 Jag 9:00 The Agency 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Sex & the City 11:00 OPTV	5:00 Quantum Info 6:30 Global Family Series 7:00 Japan Video Topics 9:00 Global Family Series 9:30 Fight Time at Elorde 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 Linawin Natin	6:00 Beast Machines 6:30 Godzilla 7:00 Batman 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Birds of Prey 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Travel Time	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 E! News Live 7:00 Behind The Scenes 7:30 Mysteries & Scandals 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 10:00 Best of Late Show 11:00 Wild On
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PAMARAN. Was featured in the German productions of "Ms Saigon," "Hunchback of Notre Dame" and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

He's currently performing in the musical staging of 'Himala' at the CCP

Eladio Pamaran does our country proud in Germany

By Andy P. Bais

SINGER and musical theater actor Eladio Pamaran is thankful for his almost two years' stint in "Miss Saigon" in Germany. It hasn't only opened a lot of opportunities for him as a performer, but most importantly, it has also made him realize his true potential as a performer.

Priest or pilot

As a child, Eladio saw himself becoming either a priest or pilot. But his career path shifted in high school: gifted with a good tenor voice, Eladio decided to pursue singing.

His first break as a performer came when he was chosen as one of the finalists in the third OPM-Fe S. Panlilio Scholarship competition in 1990. Although he didn't get the top prize, the experience of performing live before an appreciative audience inspired him to do better.

Eladio took his singing career so much to heart that he even put his music course at UST on hold in favor of being a headliner in a band for two years.

Next came the lure of the stage. He first appeared in Ryan Cayabyab's "El Filibusterismo," followed by other stage musicals like "Godspell" and 'Joseph the Dreamer."

"*Napagod na ako sa banda,* so I tried musical theater. *Sa banda kasi, kulang sa* development. In the end, *parang trabaho na lang. Gusto ko, palaging may* challenge," he says.

Auditions

When the first round of auditions for "Miss Saigon" was conducted in 1988, Eladio tried out but didn't make the grade. "I looked too young for the roles *daw*. But the 'Miss Saigon' people took note of me, and they promised to get in touch for the next round of auditions," he recalls.

He finally made it five years later to "Miss Saigon" in Germany, along with 22 other Filipinos. He later played the second-lead role of Thuy. Then he became a "swing," so he had to study all the parts of the male performers.

At first, Eladio didn't enjoy his stay in Germany because of the cultural differences, the food, cold weather and being away from his friends. "Instead *na magmukmok ako,* I took singing and dancing lessons and tried out whenever there were auditions," he relates.

After "Miss Saigon," Eladio landed roles in 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." For two years, he played Benjamin and became an understudy for Joseph.

In between theater performances, he was into other activities. "I joined a band and appeared in trade shows. I became an endorser *ng bagong kotse! Nag*-cater *din ako* because I love to cook. *Kailangan ma-abilidad ka,"* he laughs.

In 1999, he appeared in Disney's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" in Berlin, where he's currently based. Auditions for the production were conducted in New York, Switzerland, Austria and the Netherlands.

The chance to work with the likes of James Lapine as director and Alan Menkin and Stephen Schwartz as musical directors thrilled him.

Adding to his excitement was the chance to stay in New York for two months for rehearsals.

Rehearsal venue

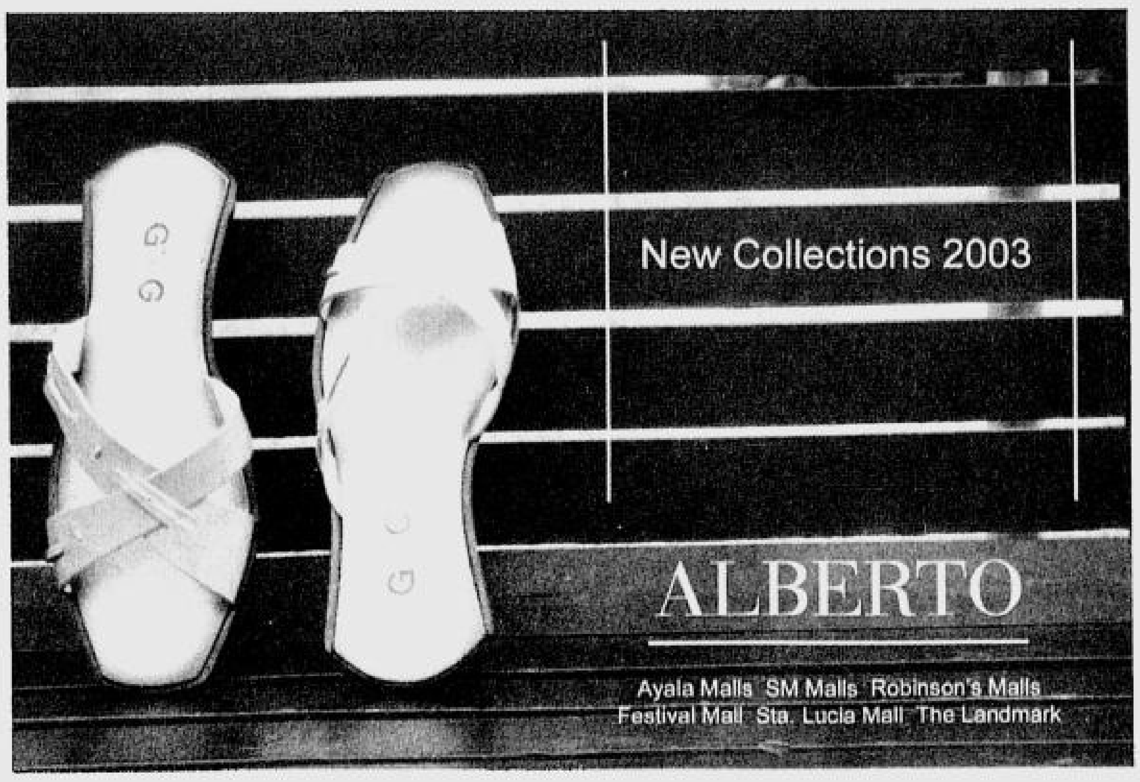
"While in New York, we stayed in a hotel in Manhattan *na katapat ang mga* theater *sa* Broadway. We also had the privilege of watching all the Disney productions for free! Our rehearsal venue was the same stage where "Dreamgirls," "Cats" and "Chorus Line" were staged. *Nakasalubong pa namin si* Glenn Close *doon,"* he enthuses.

In 2000, he was all set to join the cast of "The King and I" for the West End, where Jason Scott Lee was the lead. He was tapped to cover for the role of Lun Tha, but he backed out at the last minute. *"Inaayos ko kasi ang* residency *ko sa* Germany. If I left, I would have lost it," he says.

The following year, Eladio took a leave from his busy schedule in Germany and came here for a visit. It wasn't a complete break from theater work, however. He appeared in Trumpets' "The Little Mermaid" and CCP's "Carmen."

Upon his return to Germany, he shot a movie, "Yargo," which will be entered at the Berlin filmfest. He plays a Filipino-German involved in a money scam.

He is now a freelance artist. He's part of the current musical staging of "Himala" at the CCP's Huseng Batute, where he plays Orly, the filmmaker (played by Spanky Manikan in the film).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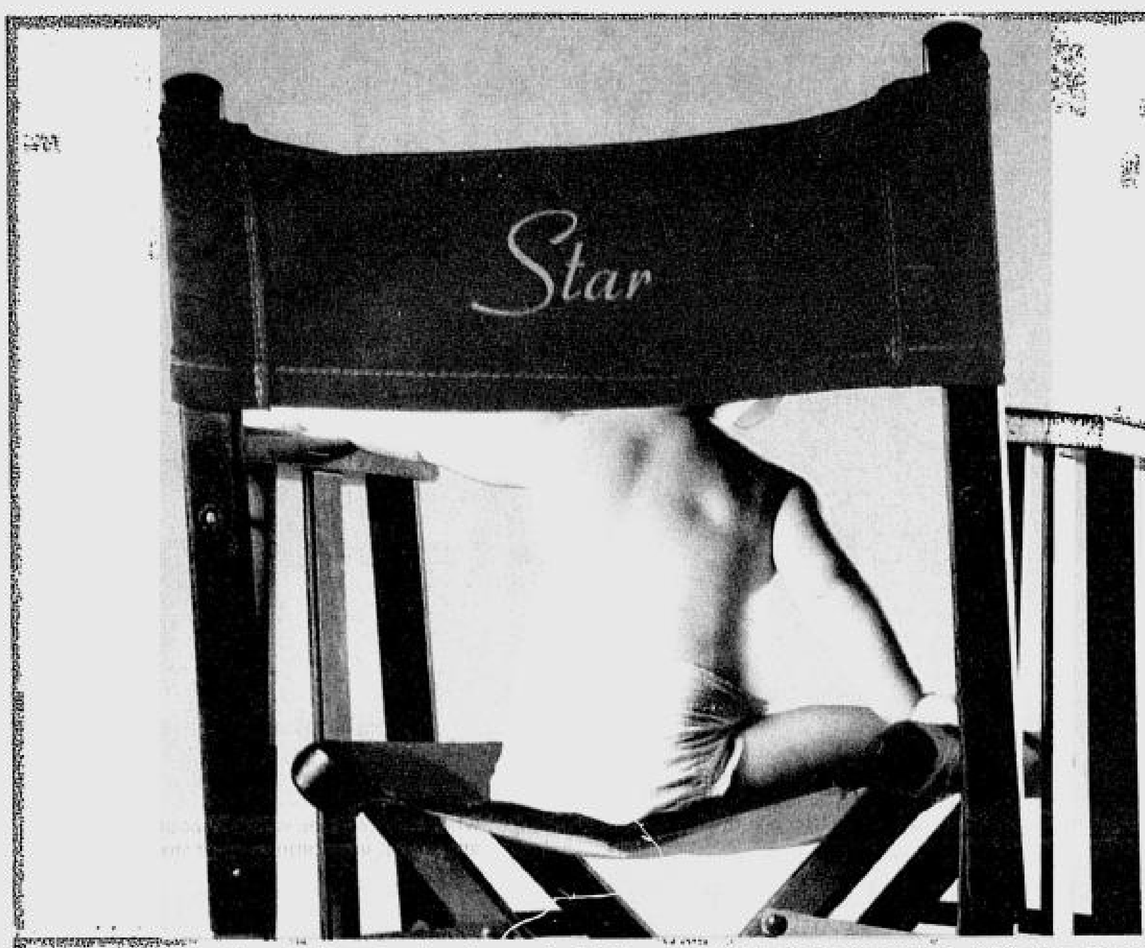

HE WON'T JUST BE A CELEBRITY AT HOME.
Join the search for the HUGGIES® Happy Baby of the Year!

CONTEST MECHANICS

1. Mothers/ fathers must send a recent picture of their happy baby (between 0-2 years old) printed on Kodak, preferably 4R paper with a proof of purchase from HUGGIES® Dry Comfort, HUGGIES® Dry, HUGGIES® Dry Overnites and HUGGIES® Ultratrim with the front panel complete, enclosed in an envelope with the following details:
   a. Name of baby
   b. Name of father/mother
   c. Address & telephone number
   d. Signature
   e. Brief description of the baby's picture

Outside the envelope, indicate whether baby is a boy or a girl.

2. Entries may be dropped off at Regional GMA-7 stations, selected Kodak Express stores and SM supermarkets nationwide.

3. Deadline of submission of entries for the weekly draws is every Thursday, 6pm from October 23, 2003 to November 20, 2003.

4. 20 entries will be randomly drawn and judged. From these entries, there will be 10 boys and 10 girls. The draws will be held every Monday, 10-11am, starting October 27, 2003 to November 24, 2003. at Promotech Resources, Inc., Kamuning, Quezon City.

5. Criteria for Judging:
   a. The pictures should depict a "Happy Baby" - 20%
   b. Baby should be healthy-looking and cute - 40%
   c. Short description of the photo - 20%
   d. The picture should not be a shot where implications of violence, dirt and embarassing moments are seen - 20%

6. This shortlist will be composed of two boys and two girls with the highest scores. These top four scorers will be featured per episode but only two (1 boy & 1 girl) will be chosen to be part of the Grand Finals.

7. The boy and the girl with the highest scores will be the weekly winners.

8. There will be six episodes with a total of twelve (six boys and six girls) winners for the duration of the promo (two winners per episode).

9. Babies should be between 0-2 years old upon the end of the promo December 14, 2003.

10. Out of the twelve weekly winners, one will be chosen as the HUGGIES® Happy Baby of the Year.

11. Prizes: Weekly winners will be part of the HUGGIES® Happy Baby Calendar for 2004 and will win Kodak cameras and HUGGIES® gift packs worth Php 5,000.00. Grand Prize winner wins Php 500,000.00 and a Kodak digital camera.

12. Prizes in kind are not convertible to cash and non-transferable.

13. The announcement of winners in the weekly draws and the HUGGIES® Happy Baby of the Year will be announced at "SIS" on the following dates:
   a. Oct. 31, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   b. Nov. 7, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   c. Nov. 14, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   d. Nov. 21, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   e. Nov. 28, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   f. Dec. 5, 2003 – 2 weekly winners
   g. Dec. 12, 2003 (Grand Finals) – one HUGGIES® Happy Baby of the Year

14. Winners may claim their prizes within 60 days from receipt of notification via registered mail.

15. Grand Prize can be claimed at Ogilvy & Mather Philippines, 15th floor, Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Winner must bring the following as proof of identity:
   a. Any valid identification (company ID, driver's license, birth certificate, SSS, passport or VISA)
   b. Happy Baby winner
   c. Baby's birth certificate (to prove that child is between 0-2 years old)
   d. Registered mail sent by Ogilvy & Mather Philippines, to claim prize.

16. Weekly prizes can be claimed at Promotech Resources, Inc., Kamuning, Quezon City. To claim their prize, winners must present the following:
   a. Any valid identification (company ID, driver's license, birth certificate, SSS, passport or VISA)
   b. Happy Baby winner
   c. Baby's birth certificate (to prove that child is between 0-2 years old)
   d. Registered mail sent by Ogilvy & Mather Philippines, to claim prize.

17. For provincial weekly winners, arrangements will be made by Promotech to deliver prizes.

18. A participant can only win once in the weekly draws.

HOME VIEWER'S MECHANICS

1. Promo period: October 31, 2003 to December 17, 2003.

2. Home viewers must download the logo of a Happy Baby to be shown during the "SIS" TV show to vote for the Happy Baby of the Week.

3. Every download costs P15.00 for both postpaid and prepaid subscribers.

4. To vote for a particular baby, type in:
   Huggies_(letter of baby picture choice)_name_address
   And send to:
   4627 – for Smart and Talk N' Text subscribers
   2364 – for Globe and Touchmobile subscribers

5. The texter will receive a message to acknowledge each download. He/she is entitled to one vote equivalent to one raffle entry. Sample message will be: "Thanks for voting at the HUGGIES® Happy Baby Hunt brought to you by HUGGIES® and Kodak. Each download earns you one entry to the raffle. Promo ends December 17, 2003. Cost per download is P15.00. Per DTI-NCR Permit Number 3055 series of 2003."

6. There will be no limit to the number of votes a participant can send. The more votes they send, the more chances of winning. Deadline of submission of votes is every Wednesday from November 5, 2003 to December 17, 2003.

7. Winners will be determined through an electronic raffle at GMA New Media, Incorporated (GMA NMI) every Thursday, 1pm of every week from November 6, 2003 to December 11, 2003. There will be one winner per week. The winner will be drawn from all the entries sent by texters who voted for the winning babies of the week. A participant can only win once during the promo period. Winner will receive a HUGGIES® gift pack worth Php 2,500.00.

8. Winners will also be announced within "SIS" every Friday through a winner's plug and in a newspaper of general circulation at the end of the promotion.

9. Winners will be notified by a text message from GMA's special access number, a call from GMA NMI's authorized representative and by registered mail.

10. Qualified winners must claim their prizes within sixty (60) days from receipt of notification. Failure to claim within the allotted time duration forfeits the winner's right over the prize with prior DTI approval.

11. The prize may be claimed at Ogilvy & Mather Phils., 15th floor, Philamlife Tower, 8767 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. For winners outside Metro Manila, Promotech Resources, Inc. shall contact the winners and make arrangements for claiming the prize.

12. Winners must present the following when claiming their prize:
   a. A congratulatory text message coming from GMA's access numbers
   b. Any valid ID with picture and address
   c. The SIM card where the entry was made
   d. The registered mail they received from GMA.

Employees of Kimberly-Clark Philippines, Inc. and Kodak Philippines, their franchisees, their advertising agency, Ogilvy & Mather, PR, promotion agencies and all participating outlets including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest promotion.

Promo period: October 31, 2003 to December 17, 2003.

Tune in to SIS (10:30-11:00 am) and other GMA primetime shows (6:40-10:40 pm) for more details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3055 series of 2003

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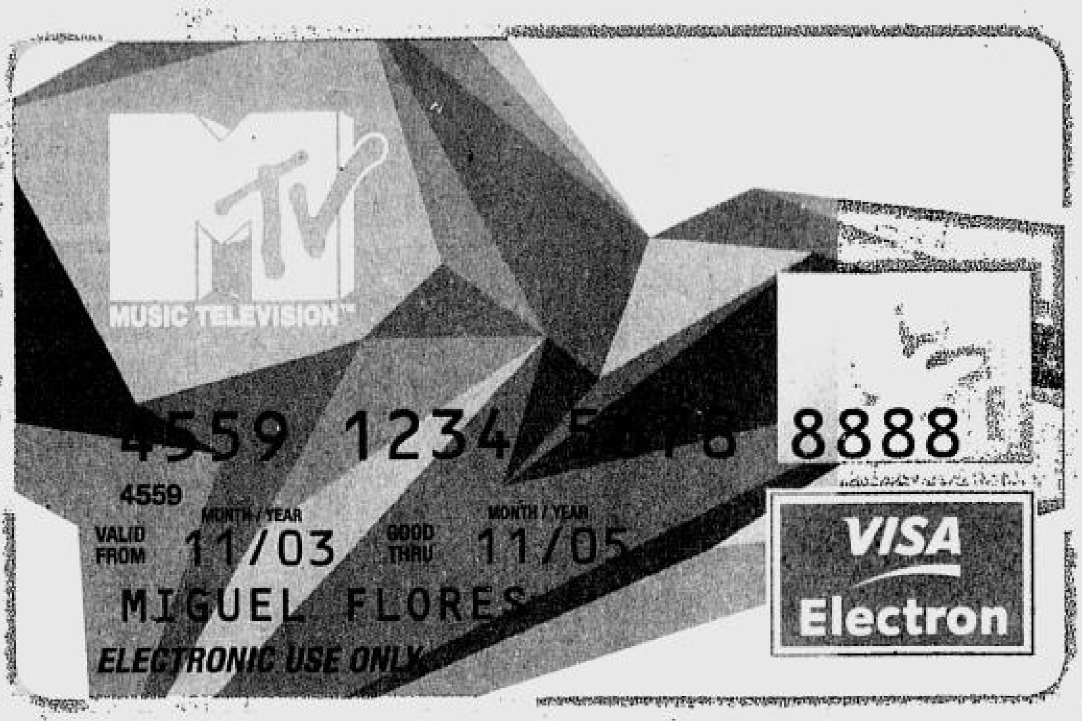
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- Café Mediterranean
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- Chef & Brewer Café & Restaurant
- Pazzo
- Piper's Wine & Bar Restaurant
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Contributing Editor **Pam Pastor**
Creative Director **Tim Yap**

Countdown:
40 days 'til Christmas

roam!

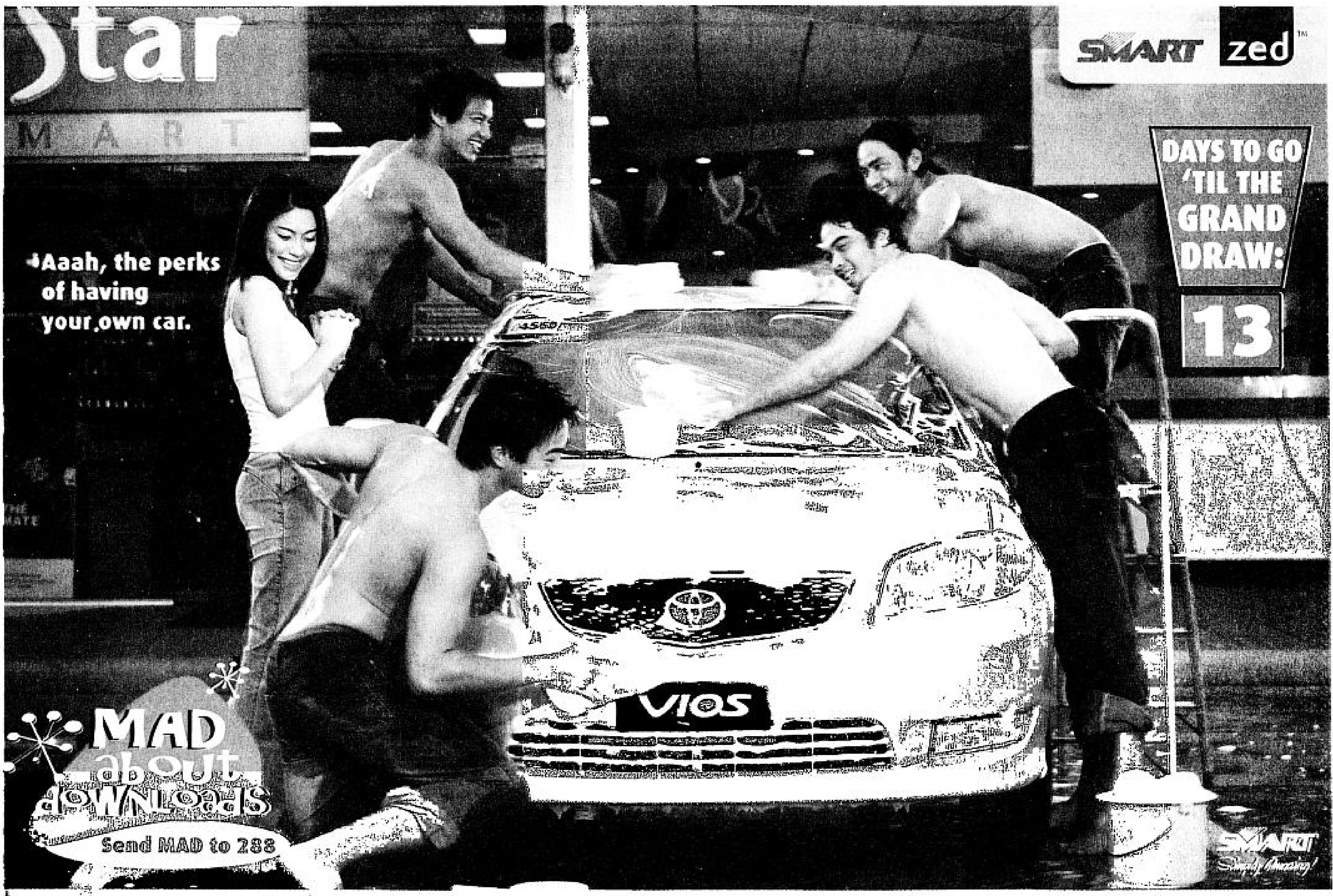
PHOTO BY JOAN BITAGCOL

IKC Concepcion's first Super! column page J3

Will Mariah charm Manila? page J3

fashion en force! page N2

Behind the scenes at the FHM 2004 calendar page M1



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Great! ur now qualified to win in d MAD About Downloads Promo! 1 download = one raffle entry! To find out ur current entries, snd MAD ENTRY to 288. P2.50/message received. Start downloading NOW! Snd MAD TONE to 288 n get surprised with a random tone. For logos, snd MAD LOGO, for pic msgs, snd MAD PIC P15/downloads. Promo Period from September 6 to November 28, 2003. Per DTI-NCR Permit No.3792, series of 2003.

Once registered, you can get a chance to win by downloading exciting logos, picture messages and ringtones:

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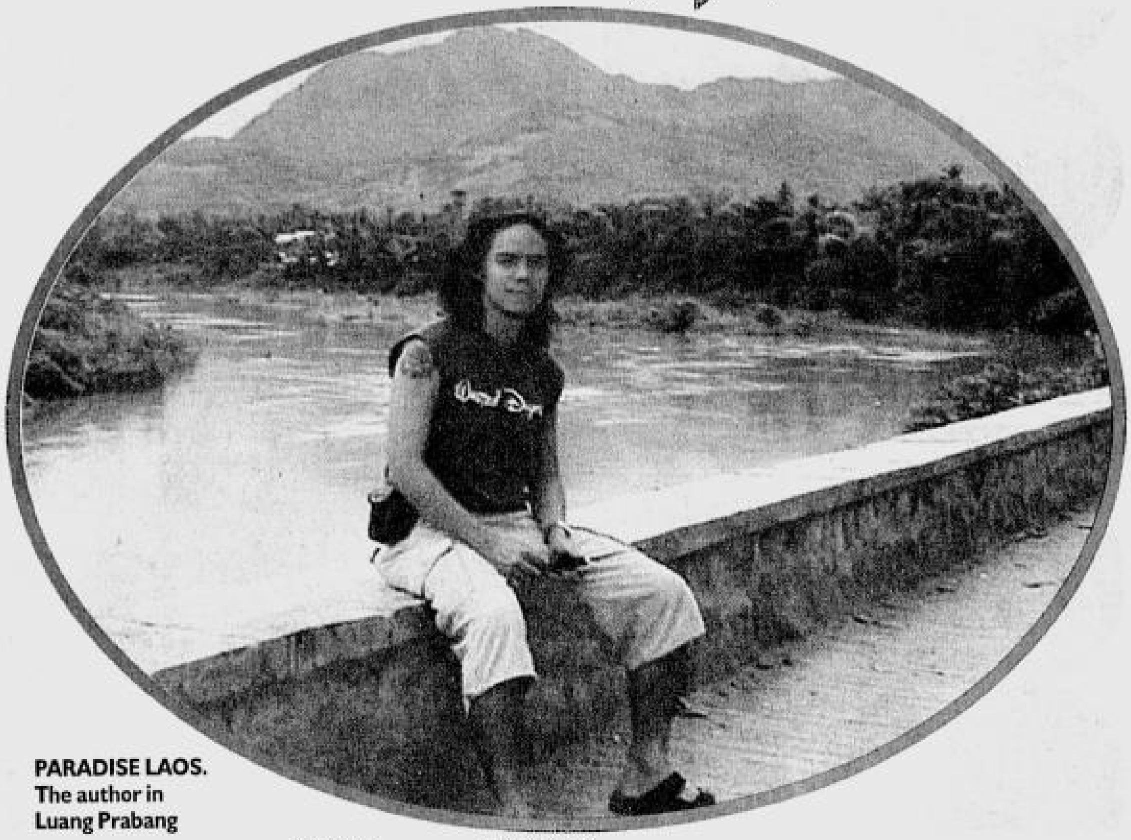
Promo Period from September 6 to November 28, 2003. See flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No.3792, series of 2003

Shot on location at Caltex Sen. Gil Puyat ave. (formerly Buendia ave.) corner Leveriza st., Pasay City.

The art of discovery is threatened—the thrill of being impressed by new sights, accommodated by new acquaintances, stimulated by unique flavors, challenged by unfamiliar histories.



PARADISE LAOS. The author in Luang Prabang

The Fall of the Roaming Empire

By Martin Valdes

"Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

MY NAME is Martin Valdes and I am a traveloholic.

I have surfed the swells of Sydney, observed the mating rituals of whales off the coast of Hermanus, collapsed in a drunken heap in a pub in Dublin, been spat on in Venice, had my face rearranged in Manila ...

Travel is my drug of choice. It is an addiction I willingly feed and, time and budget permitting, I make it a point to visit at least one new city every year. Such a habit has gained me a sizeable portfolio of inter-cultural experiences—jaunts with fellow backpackers, one-liners in several languages calculated to initiate contact in smoky pubs, trivia ranging from apple cider to apartheid—which comes in handy when I need to impress during a conversation or write witty travel articles. The cards have always been in my favor regarding travel: I'm young, without a family of my own; I'm male, which distances me from sexist tourist poachers; I'm Asian, which makes for convenient introduction amongst Caucasian travelers weary of white company; I speak English with a slight American accent, which is a curiosity in itself; and I wield a blue passport with the emblem of an eagle clutching an olive wreath in one claw, and a sheaf of arrows in the other. It used to be so easy.

One day, two airplanes crashed into two buildings in New York, killing thousands in the immediate surroundings, ensuring the subsequent deaths of thousands more across the globe, and guaranteeing that never again would I embark on any sort of journey without lugging a sense of my own mortality.

...vibrated to '80s dance music in Freiberg, slept on the floor of a train station in Bordeaux, waved at the Pope as he served the Eucharist in the Vatican, held hands with two men in Amsterdam, skied (well, collapsed really) down the slopes of Zermatt ...

Further, the very things that used to work for me, now factor against me. My being a young male of Asian descent, while still "interesting," automatically condemns me to countless random airport security checks. After Sept. 11. 2001, I have been stopped in every airport in the world, amicably interviewed, and asked to remove my boots, as have all other young males of non-white origins who were likewise "randomly" chosen. Don't get me wrong—I am all for tightened security, and I must confess that I harbor a strong desire to be frisked by a woman in uniform. But attempts at political correctness are an insult to commuter intelligence. We all know why we were selected. If they must X-ray my underwear, they might as well admit I am being picked because I've got a suspicious crotch, not because they want to watch me pose in my Calvin Kleins.

The fact that I speak the way I do and carry travel docs issued by the United States of America now carries with it the stigma of actually being an American citizen. Just in case you still didn't know, America is *not* the most popular nation in the world today. Years ago, it was: "Oh, you lived in Florida? How nice!" Today it's: "Sc--w your warmongering, cowboy president!" I am caught between explaining that I am really a Filipino who just happens to carry an American passport, and defending the US, which adopted me five years ago and which has treated me relatively well. As a child of two cultures, it is often difficult for me to mediate between my squabbling parents. I have seen their best and worst. But this is not about trashing any single nation. This is a treatise on sacred moments I have experienced between borders of this crazy, beautiful world.

...built snowmen in Montreal, felt Japanese in Tokyo, skinny-dipped in Reykjavik, kicked a goat in Tangiers, swallowed foam in Ibiza, jumped off a building in Auckland ...

The art of discovery is threatened. That is to say, the thrill of being impressed by sights one had never seen before, being accommodated by folks one is meeting for the first time, being stimulated by unique flavors, challenged by unfamiliar histories, inspired by new literature. The current climate demands that we be wary and keep our eyes open for "suspicious activity." A few years ago, "suspicious activity" was something backpackers looked out for, so that we could take pictures and be educated on the local customs. But now we observe not to learn, but to condemn. How am I to endorse the savage beauty of Palawan to my Australian friends when their government has issued a travel ban on the Philippines? How do I write about the warmth of Florida when they refuse me passage? How will I tell my sons and daughters one day that Mesopotamia was the cradle of civilization, but the US bombed it into fertilizer back in 2003? What truly frightens me is not that I will never be able to travel again, but that travel will never again have that unfettered, unguarded air of wide-eyed discovery, uncompromised by paranoia or xenophobia.

I realize that I am fortunate to have had the resources and support necessary for such extensive travel as I've done. But lest you think this is about a poor little rich brat bemoaning the possibility that he may never have an authentic cappuccino again, allow me to quote Robert Louis Stevenson: "For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake." Likewise, it doesn't matter where I go, be it Kuala Lumpur or Quiapo. The act of going is in itself an expression of freedom. I am on this earth to experience life, mundane or profound.

...lost money in Monaco, lost my girlfriend in New Orleans, lost my way in Bangkok, lost my sense of humor in New York, lost my marbles in Malmo, lost time in Luang Prabang ...

We are at a crossroads in our communal journey, my fellow travelers. We can go separate ways and allow our grudges and prejudices to inhibit the full experience of being alive. Or we can take a chance and try to trust one another again. Too often, the emphasis in travel is to actively seek out what is not familiar, to observe, to take clandestine photographs and to comment objectively. What we often forget is that while it is our differences that may make us interesting, it is our similarities that bind us.

...and found safe haven amongst my fellowman.

(lasengnomad@yahoo.com)

Eye Wander

Hey momma! The more the merrier, baby.

Man about town

CHUCK DY

Dear Man About Town,

My boyfriend and I have been going out for about a year now. Lately, I notice he's been eyeing other girls. He says he's "just looking," and there's nothing wrong with that. Should I be worried? How do I get him to stop "looking"?

This complex situation demands a sensitive and sagacious approach. Only the most appropriate words would do for a response at once tactful and direct. Oh, I have it. You are screwed.

No matter how proficient you are at romantic poker, this is a losing hand. Your king of hearts is checking out random queens and playing the there-is-no-harm-in-looking card as his trump. If you rein the man in, you risk aggravating him by threatening his independence, while rendering yourself vulnerable by exposing a jealous side. On the other hand, letting him be would be tacit consent or, worse, submissive acquiescence. This classic conundrum template has inspired the '80s power ballads and countless suicides. Your options are limited and bleak, reminiscent of our '98 Presidential polls.

Most "relationship experts" would suggest a chat with the beloved, to dig up the root of the problem. In short, they would identify the "looking" as a symptom, and mutual understanding as panacea. I've dated a few of these experts and I can tell you that many of them live alone and torture their pets. The simple truth is, your man looks at other women for the same reason that you would look at other men: he finds them attractive. Whether this means he is in the first stages of cheating on you is another matter.

Should you worry? You have been dating for a year; that's impressive. By now you should know your partner well enough to answer your own question. Has he ever called you by another name in the throes of passion? Do strangers wave and call *him* by another name? Does he refuse to watch "Fatal Attraction"? These and other less subtle signs may help you see if this is the man you should spend the rest of your life with.

In defense of the male species, I must clarify that looking in itself does not suggest anything more than aesthetic assessment. A clinical appraisal of what one beholds on a regular basis is never adverse, and allowing one to make detached, objective statements. For instance:

"Joyce Jimenez has a callipygian figure."

"Cindy Kurleto's face is like an ivory rose."

"Kris Aquino ... now there's a character."

On the other hand, excessive voyeurism is never good, as it seems to imply a man's diminishing appreciation for the hand that he already holds.

There are several ways to minister to the inveterate "looker," none of them approved by Oprah. While the Biblical methods are the most immediate and effective, they inevitably result in permanent sight impairment and similar disabilities. So I shall stick to methods protected by the Constitution.

Method One requires conditioning. Just as Pavlov (that mad genius!) trained his puppies to salivate at the sound of the dinner bell, you can condition your boyfriend to associate a certain action with a specific reaction—that would be "looking" and pain, in your case. Every time he glances at a passing beauty, kick him on the shin. If this happens while you're strolling, pretend to trip and kneel on his big toe. If he gawks at the coffee girl while you're lounging in Coffee Bean, treat his crotch to an espresso.

Be creative without being destructive—the goal is to hamper, not to handicap. Apologize profusely after each instance, creating the facade that you are merely clumsy and not insecure. Soon he will associate non-girlfriends with physical suffering, and realize that you are the only woman he can gaze at without requiring immediate medical attention.As an added bonus, he may even begin to be more affectionate towards you, as he mistakes self-preservation for love.

If conditioning fails, proceed to Method Two: adopt a conduct of reciprocal nature. Join the Audubon-bon Society of Male Watchers. Start throwing appreciative glances at passing men. Fall silent in mid-sentence when a delicious hunk in tight jeans saunters by. Give your ocular muscles a workout in public places. Let them wander, woman! A strange phenomenon that persists despite vigilant attempts at sexual equality, is the fact that while women get irked when their men "look" around, most men go absolutely ballistic when their women do the same. It is a harsh lesson, and many men do not recover from the blow to the ego. Method Two is a guaranteed reality check. The down side is, you may discover that the boyfriend shares your fascination for Diether Ocampo's behind.

Last resort, if the boyfriend survives pain and humiliation, is Method Three. Make yourself the center of all attention. The city is a hurricane of interest and you are at the eye of every storm. Be sexy, be loud, be subversive, be aggressive. Think of Monica Bellucci in outrageous leather, and chugging Moet from the bottle. Soon your wayward lover will realize he'd rather not have all the other men panting after you, and hopefully initiate a compromise: he will stop checking out other girls if you put your clothes back on. The danger in Method Three is that you may come to enjoy all this new public influence, and your boyfriend will start writing to me.

But alas, as God is a restless artist, there will always be attractive people walking around. My suggestions may stop him from ogling while in your presence, but rest assured he will repair to his hobby every chance he gets, in your absence. Instead, console yourself with the fact that in spite of all the beautiful flesh on display, your man chooses to be *your* man. Try to curb your possessive instinct and be happy that you, and not that billboard model, is holding his hand. Eventually he should come around to appreciating what a fortunate boyfriend he is. Otherwise, recall the immortal battlecry of Kris Aquino, and crush his balls.

(bohemiansamurai@yahoo.com)

Will Mariah charm Manila?

POP quiz, hotshot. Which hot diva will be breathing in Manila air tonight?

Yup, Mariah Carey is scheduled to fly in this evening in time for her concert tomorrow at The Fort Open Field.

While waiting for her plane to land, here's a mini-dose of Mariah trivia.

She bought Marilyn Monroe's white lacquered baby grand piano at auction in October, 1999 for $600,000 plus commission.

Her vocal range spans eight octaves.

She used to work in a hair salon sweeping up hair.

She reportedly held waitressing jobs and got fired from them all.

In high school, her nickname was Mirage because she hardly attended her classes.

Mariah's concert, which is part of her Charmbracelet World Tour, starts promptly at 8 p.m. Gates will open as early as 3.

Will Mariah charm Manila? We'll see.

Tickets are available at Ticketworld in all National Bookstore outlets or call, 8915610 and 6342160 and hotlines 09164674790, 09272415082, 09185878960, 09194127462.

The need for Mead

By Tim Yap

BEEN missing Joey Mead? Well, she's going back here right before the Christmas season after almost a year in Los Angeles, under contract with Wilhelmina modeling agency, one of the top agencies in the world.

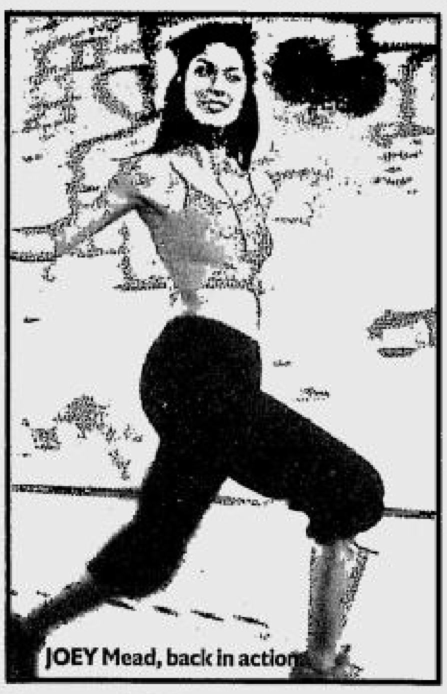
Barely a year in LA, she has worked on numerous fashion catalogues and has attended countless castings. She also bagged the Head and Shoulders account, appearing in all advertising for the Procter and Gamble prized account.

If you're from North Dakota to New York, expect to see images of Miss Mead on your television screens, swishing her tresses and winking at you like only Joey Mead can.

This month, she will return to Asia where she is needed in Singapore for more fashion work.

After that, she will be in Manila, her home, where she intends to go for the holidays. She plans to jet to Europe early next year to conquer new fashion ground.

You go, Super! girl.



JOEY Mead, back in action

ON front row center.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4620 Series of 2003.

AFTER HOURS AFTER HOURS AFTER HO

Compiled by Adrian Cuenca

SATURDAY, NOV. 15:
Nuvo: Electrolounge with Scrambled Edge and Don Renato (Jazz, Brasilia and Broken beat)
Acquario: Erwin Edralin (deep & funky house)
Dreambar: Circo Loco with Manolet Dario (progressive house) and percussionist Fritz Barth
Wherelse?: R&B and Hip Hop
Absinth: Pump with Joe Henzon & Carlo Ching (tech-house)
Tiananmen Bar and Resto: Couch Culture by Couch Lab (Chill Out, Balearic)
Wasabi: Saturd80's, New wave and dance music from the era with DJ Luis and DJ Jojo
Olive: The Boiler Room with Nicky Jurado (Hard Dance), Owens Sun (Progressive house) and Myk Tolentino (Progressive, tech-house)
Fidel: Velvet Mafia with Cocoy Puyat (house) and Bingo Ang

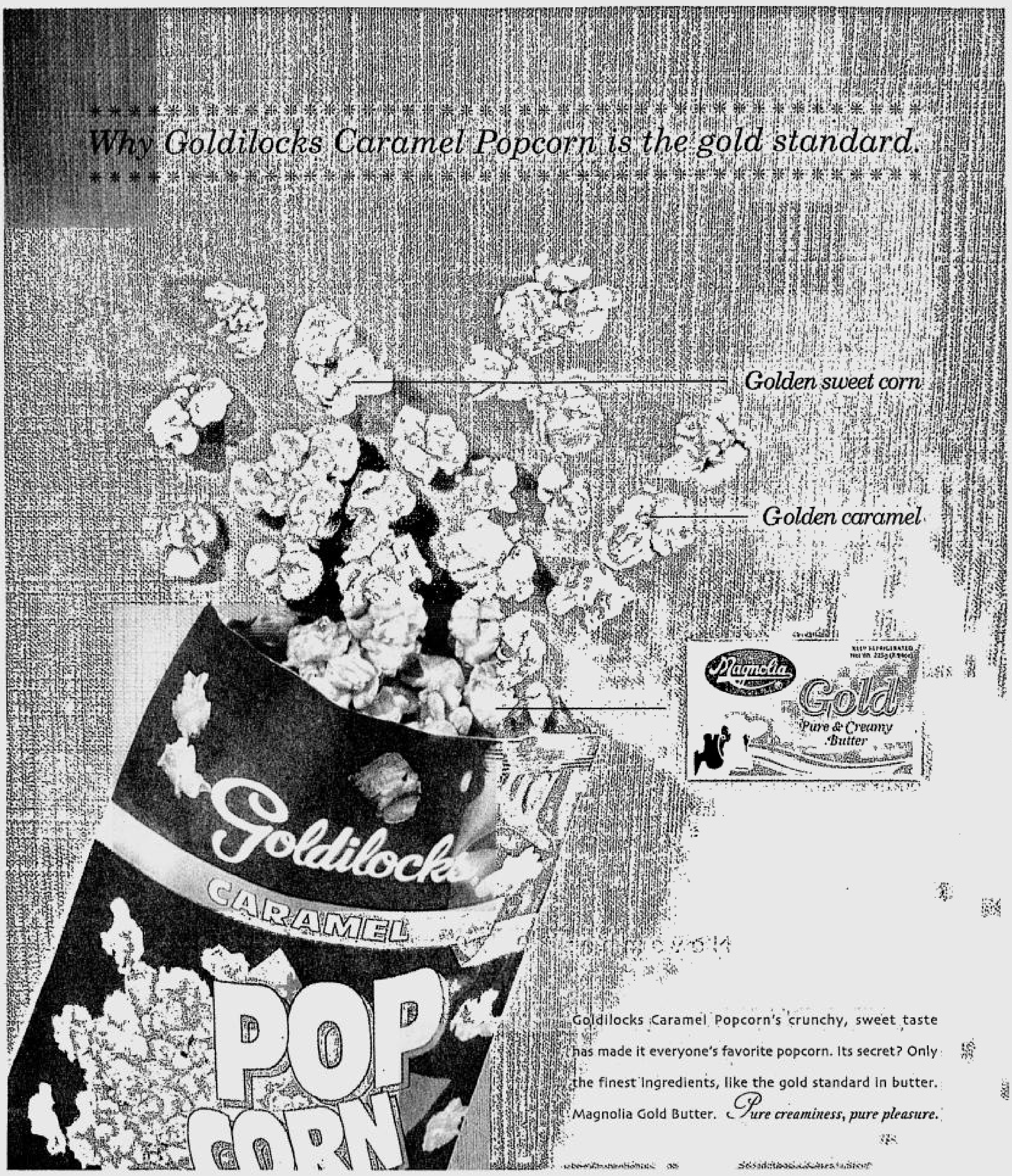
TUESDAY, NOV. 18:
Temple: Goodlife Tuesdays with Steve Mills & Paolo Cabalfin (R&B)

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 19:
Absinth: Smooth Wednesdays with Steve Mills (R&B, hip hop)
Absinth: Smooth Wednesdays with Steve Mills (R&B, hip hop)
Flute: Johnny Walker presents: Walk on the House Side with DJ Patch (funky house)
Olive: Syrup with Lester Castillo (R&B) & guest DJs
Bora Bar: Manolet Dario (Progressive house)

THURSDAY, NOV. 20:
Temple: Yin Yang, a sonic fusion of R&B and House music with Kevin Ruiz.
Olive: Freeflow with Myk Tolentino & guest DJs
Azzurro: Plush Thursdays with Steve Mills (R&B)
Bykes Cafe: DJ Luis (retro '70s to '90s)

FRIDAY, NOV. 21:
Restaurant 12: 12 after 12 with Chip de la Calzada (sexy, deep house and lounge) and Elian Habayeb (lounge to New York deep house)
Dreambar: Decadance with DJ Luis & DJ Eric ('80s and '90s)
Wasabi: Vibe Fridays with Steve Mills (R&B)
Acquario: Erwin Edralin (Deep & funky house).
Tiananmen Bar & Resto: Couch Culture by Couch Lab (Chill Out, Balearic)
Olive: Essential (the anthems 1999-2001) with Anthony Kierulf, Jay Tengco and Jon & Marc Naval.
Wherelse?: PURE Camp John Hay (AD CONGRESS): Solar TV presents Manolet Dario (house, progressive house)

For your gigs to be published e-mail adrian@djconspiracy.com by Wednesday afternoon.



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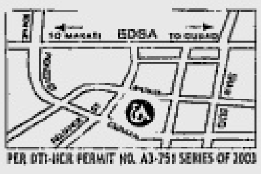

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SATURDAY Super!

24 HOURS with Alice Peacock

By Owian Castrillo

SUPER! spent a whole day with Chicago-based alternative pop artist Alice Peacock when she came to Manila recently for a promo tour. "Bliss," Peacock's new single which features Jon Mayer, is enjoying maximum rotation on you fave stations, and for good reason.

Her music is much like herself: honest, down to earth, intelligent, proud and happy. The pretty and talented singer/songwriter is also very humble and hardworking. Proof is how she breezed through these 24 hectic hours. Alice Peacock is a Super! Trooper!

24 HOURS/ K2

LILY
NELLY
ACQUA DI PARMA
FENDI
DE CECCO
PORTA ROSSA
PORTA ROSSA
GOLDEN POKER
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Stores Specialists, Inc.
Your World. Your Lifestyle.

present

GRAND' Italia
October 30 - November 30, 2003

Italian Festival

SAVOR Italia
October 30 - November 30
Rustan's Supermarkets

Indulge your palate in the excellence of Italian taste with a whole slew of delectable goodies.

- *Wine sampling*
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STILE Italia
October 30 - November 30
Rustan's
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Pamper yourself with the finest brands of Italian fashion and lifestyle.

- *Store-wide merchandise exhibits of premiere Italian fashion brands*

TUTTO MODA
Glorietta 4,
Ayala Center

Power Plant,
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Be among the first to discover the finest Italian fashion brands, all under one roof... soon!

Catch our fabulous showcase at Ralph's Grand Wine Experience on
November 22
Saturday, 7 pm
at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila.

Tickets are available at the Rustan's Makati Concierge
817-7789, 813-3739

CONCERTO di Natale
December 18
Thursday, 7 pm
Meralco Theater

Featuring:
The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra
under the baton of
Maestro Ruggero Barbieri
and
Francesco Fumarola,
pianist
(a protegé of Italy and
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For ticket information, please call
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Join the Italian Festival Raffle Draw for your chance to win any of these fabulous prizes:

AIR FRANCE
One (1) winner of a roundtrip ticket from Manila-Italy-Manila (Economy Class) via Air France

Alitalia
One (1) winner for two (2) roundtrip tickets from any of the main western European cities to Milan or Rome via Italy

PRINCESS
where i belong
One (1) winner for two (2) persons on a 12-night Mediterranean Cruise onboard the 109,000 ton Princess Ship sailing between Venice, Italy & Barcelona, Spain (or vice-versa)

THE PENINSULA MANILA
Overnight weekend stay for two (2) at The Peninsula Manila

Salvatore Ferragamo
One (1) winner of P25,000 gift certificate from Salvatore Ferragamo

PRADA
One (1) winner of P25,000 gift certificate from Prada

TUTTO MODA
One (1) winner of P10,000 gift certificate from Tutto Moda

Ermenegildo Zegna
One (1) winner of P25,000 gift certificate from Ermenegildo Zegna

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Cookware package worth P7,500 from Rustan's Supermarket

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One (1) unit go-kart CRG model Kali worth P120,000

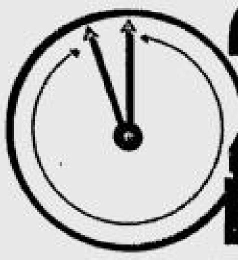
For every P2,500 purchase of participating Italian brands in single or accumulated receipts from Rustan's Department Store or P1,000 purchase of Italian brands from Rustan Supermarkets, Bon Appetit and Yum Yum Tree Coffee Shop.

*See posters for more details.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 4510 Series of 2003

9:50 a.m. Make Up Maiden

10 a.m. Bag Lady. Strategicly packing for 3 gigs

10:10 a.m. Getting a lot of TLC from husband Hugh



24 HOURS with Alice Peacock

10:20 a.m. Breakfast Queen, fueling up for a busy day

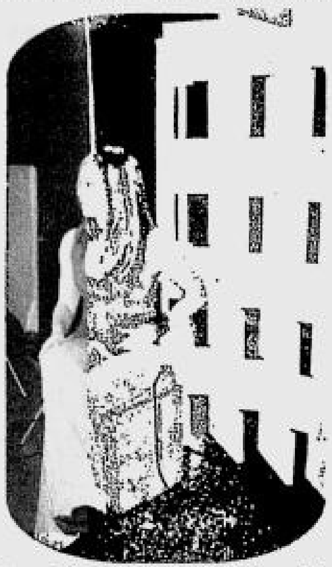
10:40 a.m. Blissful Moment. Hearing her single 'Bliss' played on the radio

12 noon. Taping her TOP 10 in the LOKAL set

11 a.m. Greeting fans at MTV

11:25 a.m. Alice on AIDS- Getting ready to speak onMTV

4:30 p.m. Alice's live performance at the Podium starts to the delight of her fans


12:35 p.m. Playing sister andgiving advice on MTV Mush

11:45 a.m. Alice all wired up.

2:15 p.m. At the Power Plant mall, on the way to Dish for sound check husband and manager Hugh Haller

2:30 p.m. Dishing it out with bandmembers Danny Howes, Guy Strauss and Brian McDonald.JPG

3:30 p.m. Home Sweet Home...for now. Back at the hotel

3:55 p.m. "That's it!" Wanting to be on a jeep that has "sex appeal" written all over it...literally

5:10 p.m. Flowers from Stephanie Borbe of AstroPlus

5:45 p.m. Fresh tattoo. Alice Peacock writing on her back

6:30 p.m. Autograph signing at O Music Video, Rockwell

4:20 p.m. Peacock and Posse at the Podium

11:00 p.m. Still at it. Writing down the song list at Eastwood.

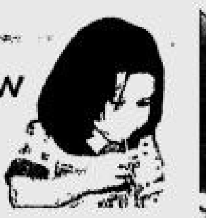
8:45 p.m. Doing her part. Alice Peacock at the AIDS SummitPress Launch at Dish

12:07 a.m. –Happy Endings–after a great job on the AXNevent at Eastwood

12:30 a.m. A super cap to a super day! Goodbye, Super!

Smiles per hour

OUT THE WINDOW



Tals Diaz

I was once on a road trip around Luzon with a multinational crew of adventurous backpackers and kindred wandering spirits, when the two Israelis of our group had suddenly contracted seizures of infectious laughter. As they fished for their Nikon SLRs, I craned my neck to look at what had set off their bellyaches. It was a sign that read: "Get high on God, not on drug."

For me the best thing about traveling around the Philippines is the endless source of amusement unique to this part of the world. It is the kind of humorous pleasure you can't read in any comprehensive travel book because it's only found in the archives of traveler's memories, shared and relived over drinks and *pulutan* among friends, veritably in the tradition of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales."

Comprehending the underlying humor and subtle ironies in these tales requires a healthy dose of a cultural understanding, which is but natural if you're a homegrown, true-blue citizen of our beloved islands. My own restless wanderings have led to cultu-real discoveries beyond views of awe-inspiring beaches, mountain ranges and waterfalls. From Sagada to Siargao, Capiz to Coron, Baler to Bohol, my fondest memories are not just triggered by the yellowing photos kept in my Bible-thick scrapbook. What downloads my mental memory sticks to crystal-clear recall are the shared anecdotes and journal scribbles that usually take me on a side-splitting laugh trip.

Everywhere, the signs

A big part of the Pinoy traveler's experience is encountering some of the road signs that range from the hilarious to the utterly bizarre. Just about every restless roamer I know has their own contribution of wacky wordplays.

My absolute favorite of the lot is the one I once saw on the road to La Union, where there was a little motel that proudly proclaimed on its outer board: "Night swimming offered 24 hours." Unless the proprietors have found a way to keep the sun from shining into their cozy little lodge (in which case they should call the Ad Congress right now and tell all about their Big Idea), I wondered how this was possible, unless the place was owned by, well, God.

Then there was this little shop of horrors seen from a bus on the way to the Mountain Province that advertised, "Puneraria/ Birthday Party Balloons For Sale." The frustrated copywriter in me felt the urge to scribble a subtitle: "From womb to tomb, we answer all your party needs!"

Other funky come-ons by extremely honest Pinoy entrepreneurs: "Wanted: GRO. At least *maganda*" and "38 Piglets for sale. No more no less."

Warning signs

Whether friendly or downright hostile, the Pinoy has come up with some of the funniest, albeit extremely straightforward warning signs for travelers. Somewhere in Pampanga, I encountered a sign outside a church that read: "Church Zone. Accident Prone Area." Perhaps it went beyond warning reckless drivers against challenging the speedometer, as it could have been a statement on the global problem of wayward priests unable to control their inner human urges. Still on the subject of churches, I once happened upon one named "Our Lady of Ransom." To this day, I am still pondering on its nomenclature, or whether it was indeed a sanctuary for Abu Sayyaf members in hiding.

In Kalinga, a sign at a construction site read: "Chicks! Sorry for the inconvenience!" Ultra-feminists who balk at the derogatory term of "chicks" should take comfort in the possibility that they were referring to the baby chickens at a nearby pen. Just a few meters away was yet another assertive admonition: "*Baboy mo, ikulong mo.*"

Other road signs meant to aid the weary traveler, yet succeeded only in composing baffling Zen koans: "STOP?" and "Take a moment." Yet my favorite mindscrew of all is one I glimpsed on a weekend surfing junket, which cryptically warned, "Beware ..."

TRIPPY!

PHOTO BY TALS DIAZ

From Sagada to Siargao, Capiz to Coron, Baler to Bohol, out-of-town trips are comic sketches from coast to coast.

Flush

Filipinos are supposedly a *mahiyain* race not wont to offending other people, as typical of the Asian culture. Yet there are some scattered portents in the outer city byways that have flushed sheer decency straight to the cesspool. Take this one seen over an uncovered manhole: "Deep Shit 2000." You gotta give that one a star for candor, at the very least. Then there was one that delivered an alternative version to that ubiquitous warning: "*Bawal umihi dito.* Please, *inuuod na kami.*"

Legendary

Every adventure always leaves me with a lineup of true-to-life comical tales that I tell again and again, especially on those blah nights among people who need a break from painful small talk. Allow me to indulge.

After quitting my first job as features editor for a lifestyle magazine, I embarked on a two-week trip through the Visayas with a small group of cave divers. On the first few days, we caught the eye of a freak storm while in the middle of nowhere in Capiz. We parked ourselves at a small bar by an unnamed beach, and decided to stay the night because of the surprisingly good selection of songs playing over the speakers—from The Doors to Bob Marley. Refusing to let the wet weather dampen our spirits, our divemaster called the waiter-slash-bartender over and requested, "Boss, Johnny Walker *nga*, please!" Half an hour and the whole "Legend" CD later, we still hadn't gotten our drinks, so I volunteered to follow up our little request. That's when I saw our devoted waiter doggedly flipping through the CD collection, looking for that elusive Johnny Walker album.

On that same trip, when the bad weather abated, we went to meet the mayor of that obscure little town to ask permission to explore the cave rivers rumored to abound in the area. My eager companions asked if there was truth to the rumor that if you swam the whole length of the the underground rivers, you'd end up in the open sea. The mayor vehemently replied, "That is not true! That is all hearsay! But one thing is for sure—there are fairies in that cave! And a golden ship! I know for sure because my *lolo* was the leader of the fairies." Needless to say, I choked on the free Coke. God bless this country!

Thus, in the spirit of adventure and in a bid to expand my collection of colorful memories, I continue to roam our islands as a wide-eyed traveler. Fittingly enough, what sums up my insatiable outer city-hopping mindset is a wise little scribble I came across on the wall of Ganduyan café in Sagada. It was a quote from Marie Curie which counseled: "Nothing in life is to be feared, only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."

(Email the author at inca_orange@yahoo.com)

Goldilocks
party
Funfeast
handang-handa na!
Add P5 only to get 1.5L Coke!*
Totoong Kain Pinoy... No.1 sa Goldilocks
Coca-Cola
*For every purchase of Party Funfeast Pang-

This is only a test

. . . and the proper frame of mind is blank.

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

A STRANGE scene played out on the European stage recently. In far away Edinburgh, Beyoncé Knowles mimicked a temperamental Godzilla by denying international flashbulbs access to her business-class ass. The restriction might have made complete sense had she been in the company of the Pope, or back in medieval Japan. But for crying out loud, she was at the 2003 MTV Europe Awards! And this is the same woman who rose to fame through songs like "Bootylicious" and scored our pop culture DNA with her broad behind in the "Crazy in Love" video. As though speaking in code, she claimed she didn't want her posterior to be the center of attention during her performance. What, and veto the intensive research and classy marketing strategy her record company drudged on to push sales through the roof? Beyoncé demanding respect for her rump? What has civilization come to? Are we witnessing a new and improved sign of the apocalypse?

Living under the shadow of doom is interesting. I have rubbed my eyes bloody with things I have read concerning the exotic behavior of this thoroughly off-center species we call celebrities. I must apologize to my devoted hyper-intellectual readership—all three of them—because this week, I gave in like a geek and wrote something profoundly fluffy to illustrate this fascination. Possibly a simple case of blind items leading the blind, cerebral acrobatics aren't involved here. When answering the 21 questions no one's asking this week, the proper frame of mind is blank. Nat Geo Quiz this ain't but in this test, what's wrong is right, if not always correct and utterly bizarre.

21 questions

1) This pop sensation packs a ton of snark in her pocket-size frame. She lately meowed, "I look at Britney and I think 'My God, what happened?'"

a. Kylie Minogue
b. Christina Aguilera
c. Sophie Ellis Bextor

2) Aside from questions regarding his sexuality, word has it that this now-married Latin heartthrob sports beanie hats to hide a balding head. Careful lighting on his videos ensures shadows across his chrome dome. One of his stylists even says he sometimes has to wear a toupee. Who's about to give Lex Luthor a run for his *dinero*?

a. Marc Anthony
b. Ricky Martin
c. Enrique Iglesias

3) This tennis hotshot was the subject of incessant bullying in high school and was ordered around by older boys to make toast.

a. Andy Roddick
b. Pat Rafter
c. Tim Henman

4) Fans of "Boston Public" know him as Harry Senate but he also played punk bully Clint in the 1993 school's-out masterpiece "Dazed and Confused."

a. Nicky Katt
b. Fyvush Finkel
c. Michael Rapaport

5) The father of this Osbourne murdered his offspring's dog and left it on the doorstep with a toetag that read "Don't f-cking screw with me!"

a. Kelly
b. Ozzy
c. Sharon

6) Which celebutante is almost in the Pammy/Tommy league? After spending a childhood addicted to "Beverly Hills, 90210," she's living out her "I'm a bigger beeyatch than Brenda" dreams by stealing Shannen Doherty's husband Rick Solomon. This airhead heiress was filmed riding Rick like a buck. From trashy to tragic, indeed.

a. Lauren Bush
b. Elizabeth Jagger
c. Paris Hilton

7) To camouflage their normally flamboyant selves from obsessive fans and sneaky paparazzi, red carpet A-listers book into hotels under false names. A respected style icon and award-winning actress has been eluding the radar lately by signing up as Kate Fleming. Who is she?

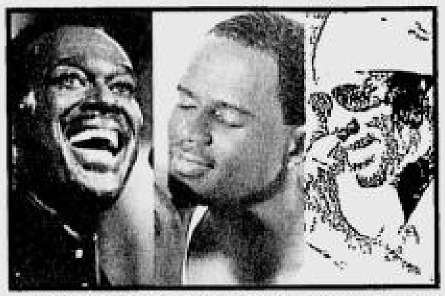
a. Gwyneth Paltrow
b. Nicole Kidman
c. Cate Blanchett

8) She might as well leave out Barcelona during her next tour because this foxy rapper's name would stink in that part of the world. It means "The Turd" in Catalán.

a. Lil' Kim
b. Queen Latifah
c. Foxy Brown

9) Openly Latino superstar Ricky Martin is jumping on the ethnic music bandwagon. His about-to-be-released single "Juramento" has an eastern-style production by Rishy Rich and Juggy D. called what?

a. Bongo
b. Beethoven
c. Bhangra



10) Michael Jackson worked with this troubled r&b singer on his new single, "One More Chance." Parents should wise up and issue restraining orders on the greasy duo since the comeback bid is being hailed as something "for the kids." Yikes.

a. Luther Vandross
b. Brian McKnight
c. R. Kelly

11) Despite being as ubiquitous as a Xanax addiction, the Neptunes declined to work on Britney's current over-hyped and undercooked album "In The Zone." Two years ago, Britney got "Boys" and "I'm a Slave 4 U" only by default; they had been written for someone else. Who's the amply-bosomed diva who turned the demos down?

a. Janet Jackson
b. Mariah Carey
c. Marilyn Manson

12) Probably putting all his hazy downtime to good use, which sensitive rock frontman is releasing a poetry book appallingly called "Little Fluffy Clouds?"

a. Fred Durst, Limp Bizkit
b. Chester Bennington, Linkin Park
c. Brandon Boyd, Incubus

13) Not to be outdone, this late-night talk show host also seeks to bore the world with a book called "If Roast Beef Could Fly." This fascinating piece of literature is based on an actual event in his household, when a "rotisserie of beef was ruined."

a. Jay Leno
b. David Letterman
c. Carson Daly

14) This illusionist spent 44 days in a box only to come out and discover that his hot German girlfriend is married to another man. Should we feel sorry, or simply ignore him?

a. Siegfried Fischbacher
b. David Copperfield
c. David Blaine

15) A superfamous designer, who pulled up the nails from the coffin of this once-faded label, is quitting after his final A/W show in July 2004. He refused to relinquish control to Printemps Redoute. The adieu is not entirely bitter since the creative director in question will walk away with an obscene sum in stocks and options.

a. Marc Jacobs, Louis Vuitton
b. Tom Ford, Gucci
c. Hedi Slimane, Dior

16) This notoriously brain-free Simpson once introspected, "Tuna—is it a fish or a chicken?"

a. Jessica
b. OJ
c. Bart

17) She's just lost a part in the new Woody Allen movie due to insurance problems, and seems set to miss out playing her friend JT Leroy's mother in a film about his life. Astonishingly, her agent doesn't think it's a good idea for her to play a druggie prostitute. Who's this '90s poster pixie whose prescription-drug habit is costing her precious movie roles?

a. Alicia Silverstone
b. Drew Barrymore
c. Winona Ryder

18) This popular super-spy is shooting a recruitment video for the real-life CIA. Who could it be?

a. Frankie Muniz, "Agent Cody Banks"
b. Jennifer Garner, "Alias"
c. Mike Myers, "Austin Powers"

19) Her crueler associates tag her as "The Wookie," thanks to a fine carpet of hair covering her face. This designer, accused of turning her ex-House into a t-shirt brand, is also allegedly pregnant.

a. Donatella Versace
b. Tara Subkoff
c. Stella McCartney

20) Touted as "90210" for the Google generation, Fox's junk TV series set in Southern California is jammed with good-looking kids, a hyperactive plot, and enough one-liners to make Aaron Spelling beam with pride. What's it called?

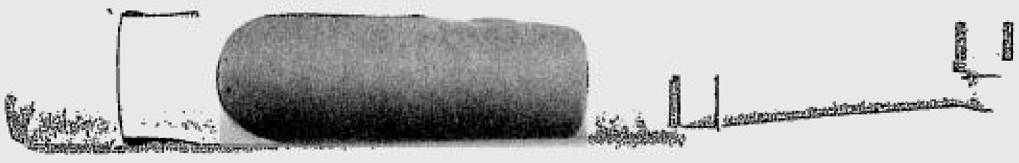
a. Pasadena
b. The OC (Orange County)
c. Rancho Penasquitos

21) She's a pudgy Disney starlet who's known first as a crappy actress and next as a crappy singer. All bunny ears with nothing in between, she also has a little dog aptly named, er, "Little Dog."

a. Raven Simone
b. Hilary Duff
c. Jo O'Meara, formerly of S Club

(Answers: 1.a, 2.c, 3.c, 4.a, 5.b, 6.c, 7.a, 8.b, 9.c, 10.c, 11.a, 12.c, 13.a, 14.c, 15.b, 16.a, 17.c, 18.b, 19.c, 20.b, 21.b)

your



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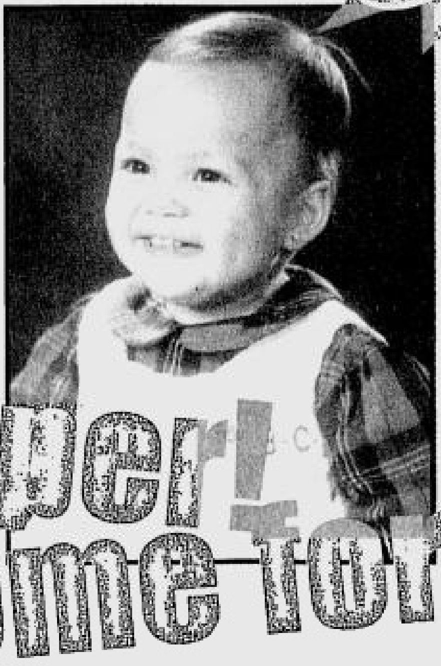
SATURDAY Super!



A Super! welcome for KC

KC is now A Super! columnist.

KC Concepcion has joined the Superfriends via her column Kulit Co. where she rants and raves about a life like hers—from her studies in Paris to learning how to cook adobo and beyond—KC is indeed, Super!

Check out her first column on page L3. More to come in the next Super! weeks.

AND God made KC...

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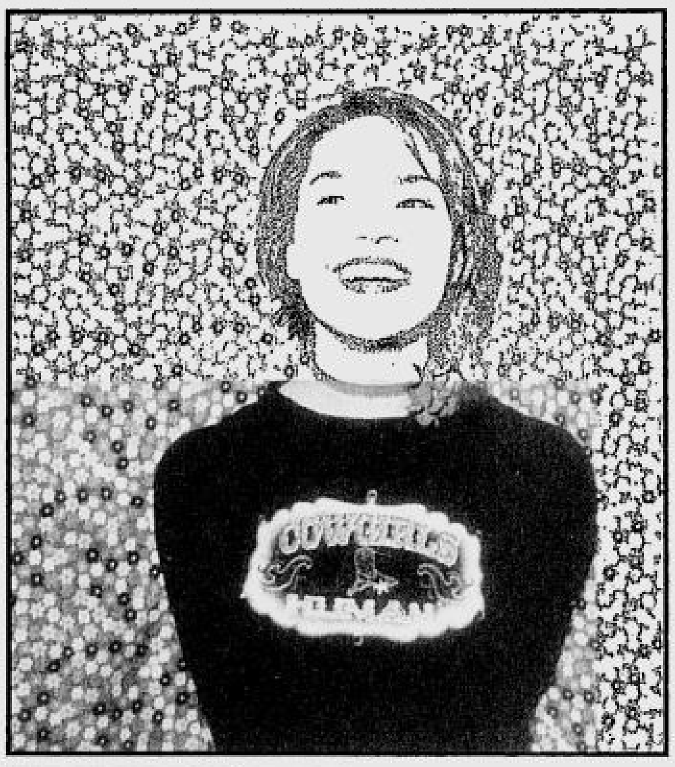

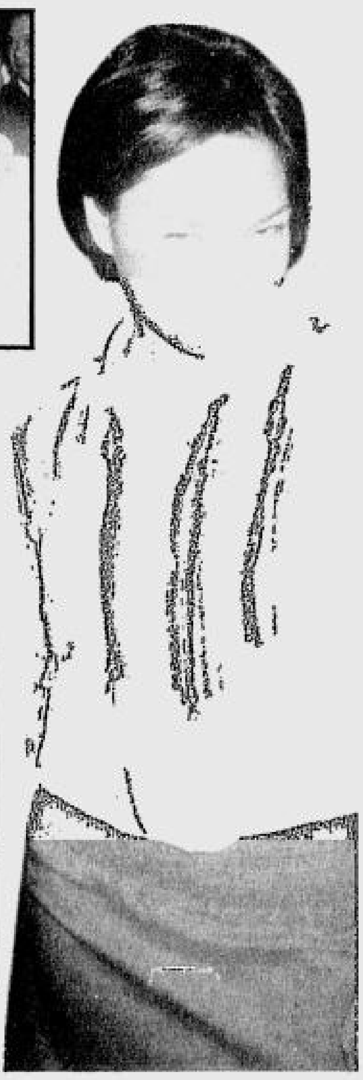

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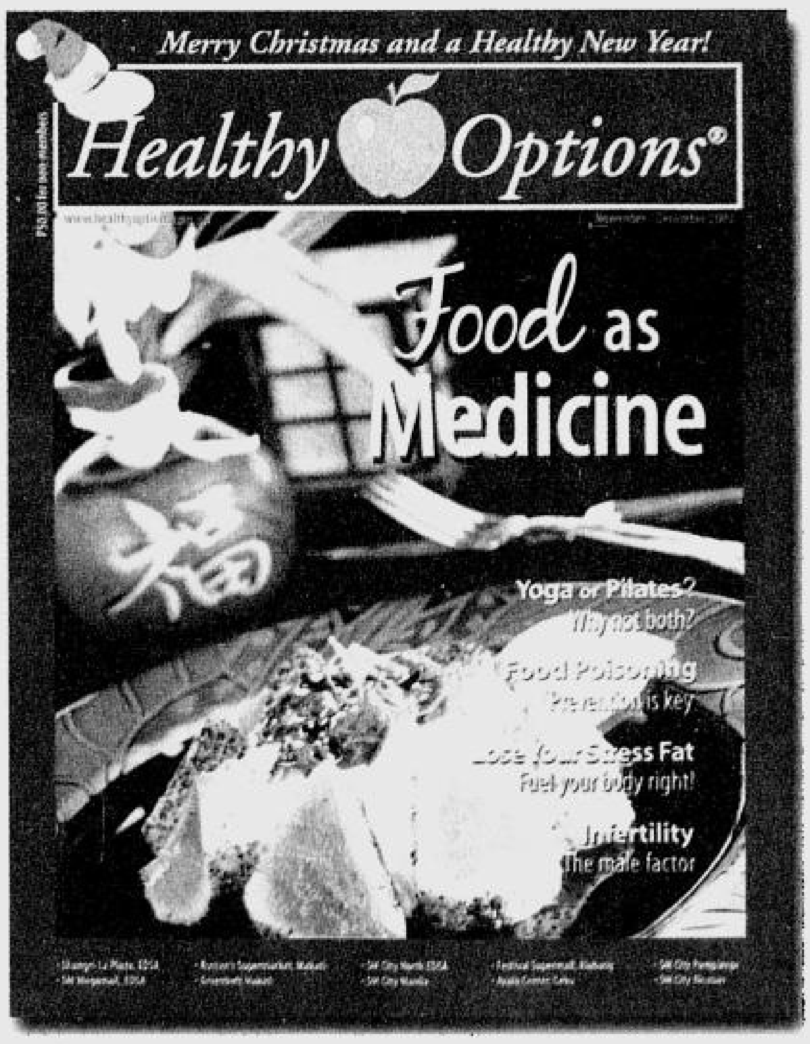

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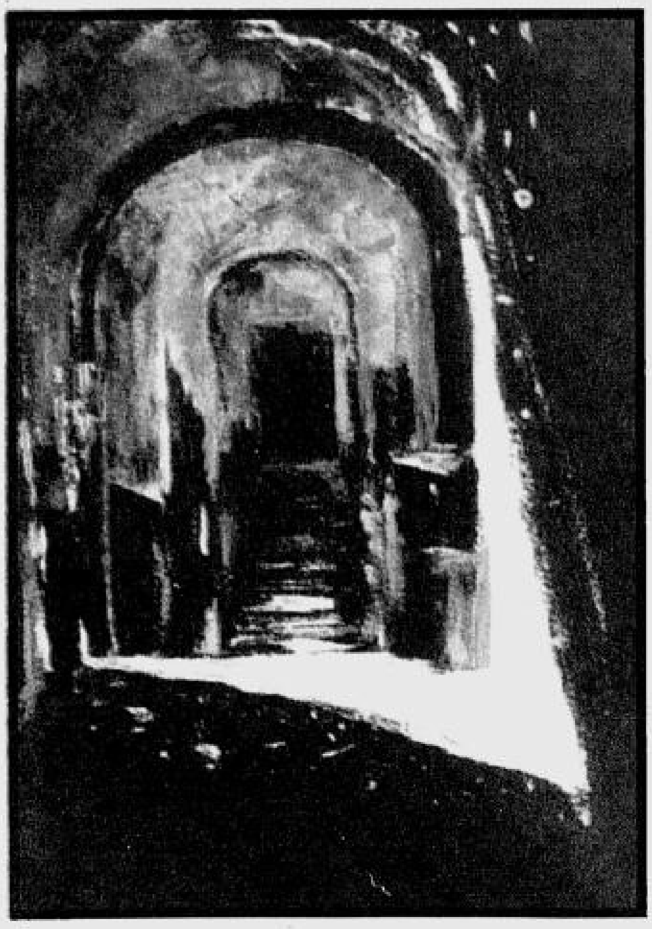


INSPIRATION SANDWICH

True Art Comes From The Heart

By Pia Rivera

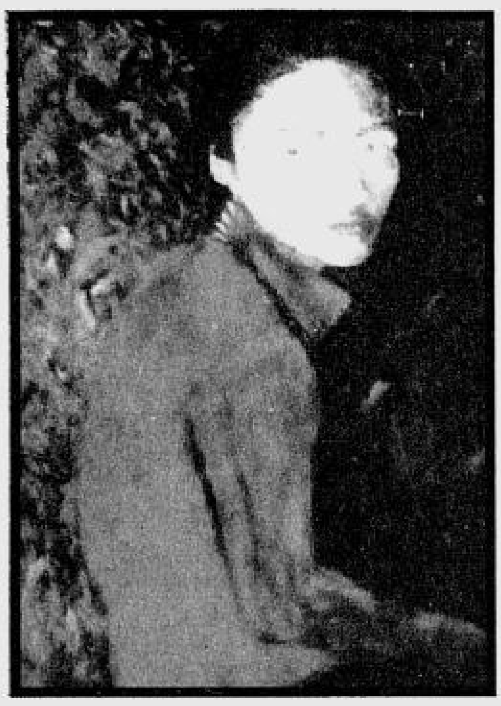
I TREAT my paintings as entries in my journal. A record of life's journey and the discovery of its symphony of beauty and color.

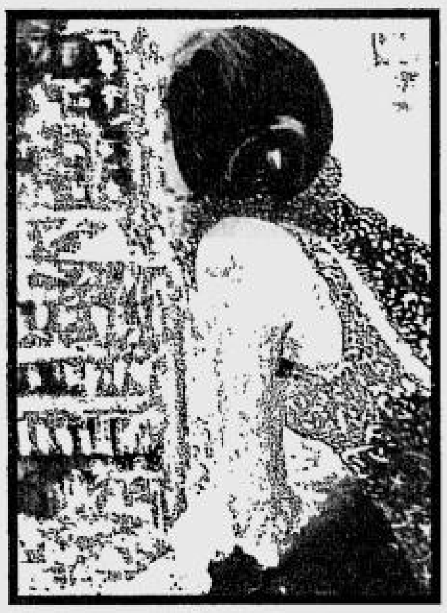
As a child I was always drawn to things that triggered my imagination. A seashell, a flower, an old pin. Out came stories of a secret garden, buried treasures, and fairy friends.

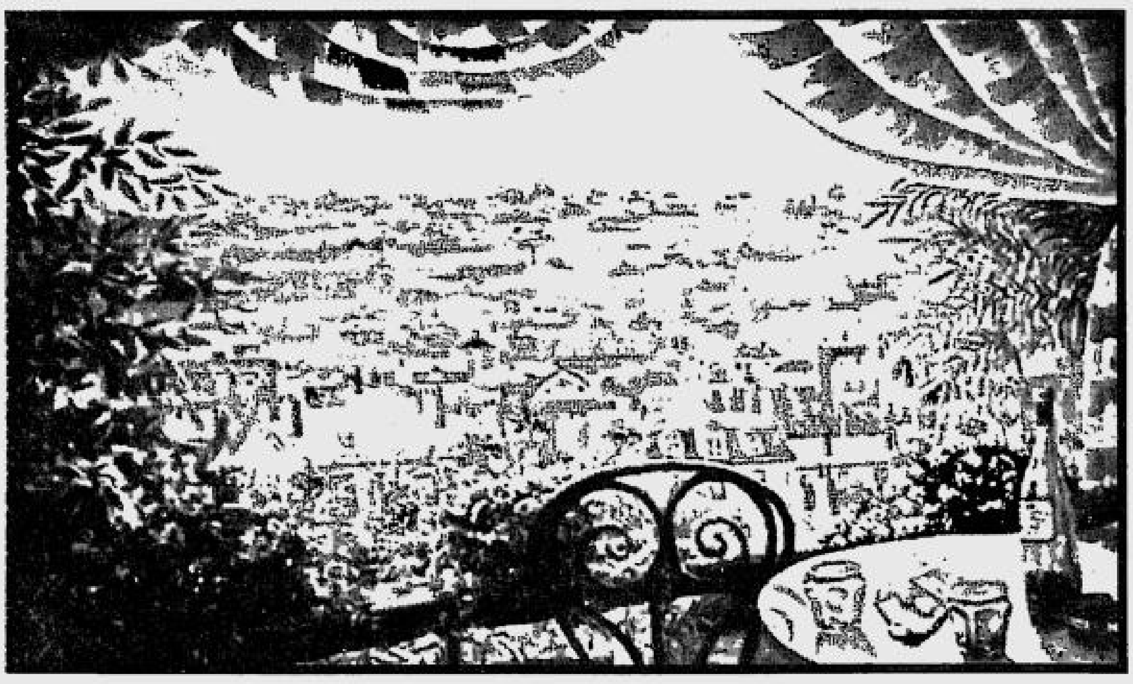
Growing up in an environment that allowed me to discover my own gifts has made me a confident and strong individual. I know that life throws us a bundle of trophies and tragedies, but life isn't about what happens. It's about what you make out of it. It's about how you've touched people's lives and in some way inspired them to see the beauty in themselves.

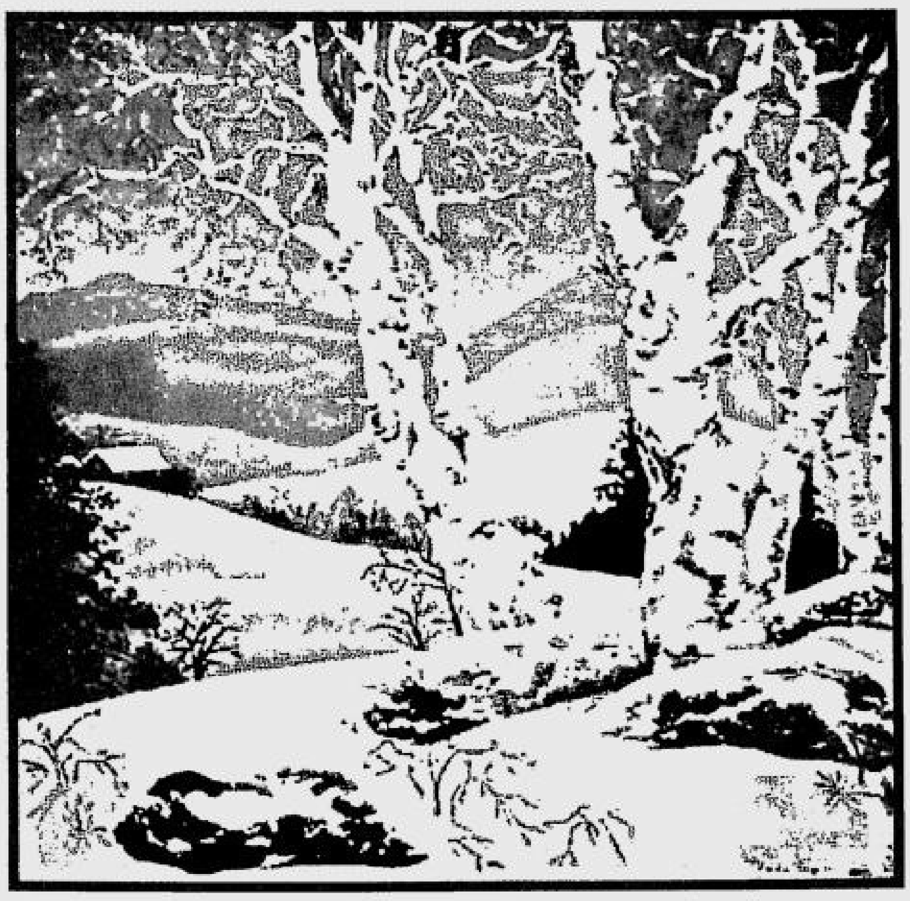
People always ask me where I get my inspiration. Inspiration comes to me in different forms and often from unexpected places. They may seem mundane to others but they beckon my artistic eye. Now I don't weave stories, but see value in many things as I go through life. A friend's dreamy look, light striking an empty hallway, a promise of love.

A cross section of Pia Rivera's art—a life lived with color and vibrance









The wind in her face

Paintings of scenery can inspire the most touching recollections. Depending on the manner by which a special place is depicted on canvas, the viewer could be transported to places far from his own familiar surroundings.

This is what one experiences when appreciating the works of Phyllis Zaballero.

Phyllis will be presenting recently painted and fondly remembered landscapes in her latest solo exhibition at the Galleria Duemila at The Artwalk, 4L at SM Megamall's building A. Entitled "The Wind in my Face," the paintings are the artist's responses to images, impressions and recollections from faraway places she has lived in and visited in the past.

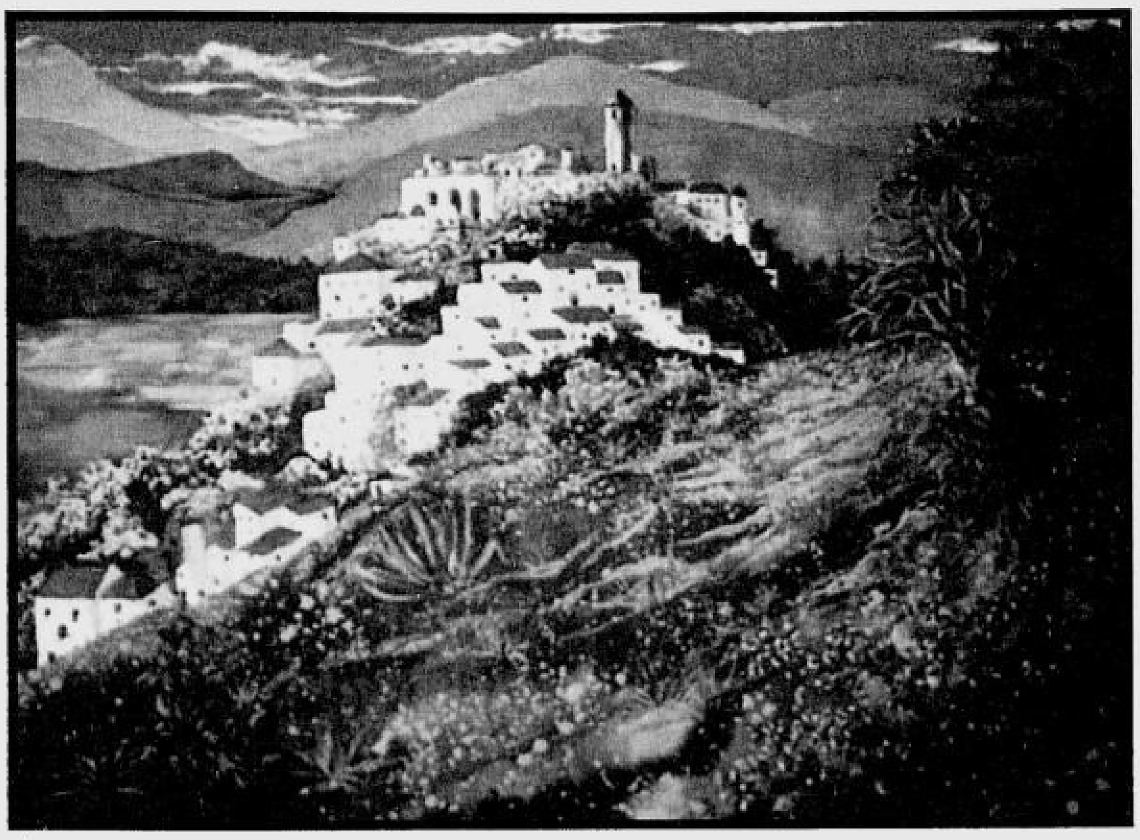
Phyllis applies oil and acrylic paint on canvases in varying sizes to produce a full gamut of surfaces, which interpret scenes from the United States, France and Spain.

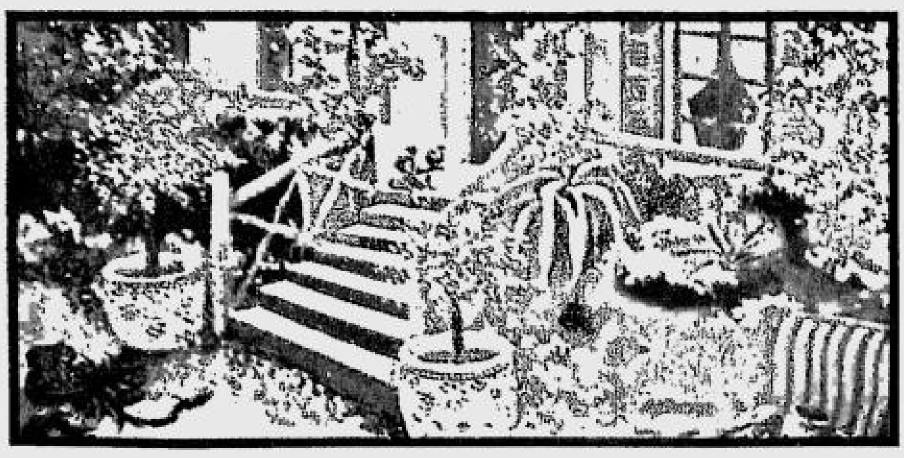
After painting in abstraction for years, Phyllis Zaballero found herself gradually reverting to the

more figurative imagery of her early youth. Traces of abstraction, interestingly, may still be seen in many of her works in this exhibit.

"The Wind in My Face" opened last November 10 and will run until November 28. For inquiries, please call Ina Cosio or Ina Fajardo at 634-3261 or Silvana Diaz at 831-9990, telefax 633-6687/833-9815, e-mail duemila@mydestiny.net or duemila@info.com.ph or visit www.galleriaduemila.com.

The brushstrokes in Phyllis Zaballero's mindscape enthralls.





Paris on a cold Monday

KULIT CO.

KC CONCEPCION

DOES anybody out there know how to prepare tuna *adobo?*

I spent half of my last few days in Manila trying to convince the cook to teach me all the Filipino recipes that she had mastered through many years of experience. For some odd reason, that was when she started cooking them only when I was out of sight. Afterwards she would feed me first, and *then* discuss the recipe.

I'm on a six-hour break between classes. It is a cold Monday afternoon; the sun is pretending to be warm. I'm beginning to miss the good ol' islands! I heard about the major multimillion-peso cleanup that made parts of Manila look super brand spankin' new. I wish I had been there to experience it, because that (sadly) doesn't happen every day! Should we invite important foreign personalities more often? Maybe then we could sustain such a positive attitude and finally jump off the top of the list of the world's polluted cities.

At this point, I am attempting to thaw my lungs with every inhalation of heater air. It is very difficult to be slumped in one of these velvety couches with a book or a music player, pen and paper, or a Kir Royal in hand, and not be transfixed. Parisian cafés are far from being overrated. Many of them are as breathtaking as they are touted to be. I'd dragged you out for some tingly *thé á là menthe* (hot mint tea) or *chocolat chaud* (hot chocolate), if you were here. Spending quiet time like this stirs up my senses. I daydream about sparkling Philippine beaches, and laughter that bubbles up from the belly, something Pinoys do so effortlessly but is almost impossible to hear in these parts.

Poodle doodle

I am hard-pressed to imagine being a traveler in Paris in 1789, during the run-up to the French revolution. I recently read up on the unfair tax system at the time, the uprising against royal rule, shortage of cheap bread and beheading of guilty nobles. Even so, the thought of seeing the city from a hot air balloon, getting from place to place in an old-style stagecoach or on a piggyback ride that you could pay a "gutter leaper" for, excites me. Yes, I mean more than hopping into an expensive Mercedes cab that often comes with a chauffeur, in itself a mini-adventure.

Paris is a truly beautiful city, with cobblestone streets that have the power to make you randomly click your heels in the air. Although poodle doodle seems to be a pedestrian staple around here, this place is meant to be seen on foot. When my feet are resting, however, I must say I still get to have the most interesting conversations with Parisian cabbies. I've had discussions ranging from the nearest and best chocolate shop in the area, to the global issue of terrorism, to corpses of local senior citizens found in their apartments after the recent heat wave.

There was this taxi man who told me about his life story. He was married to a Frenchwoman, but they divorced after he cheated on her with a beautiful Filipina that he met in Thailand. At that moment, I didn't even bother divulging my country of origin, or what I thought of Frenchmen. I had been warned not to smile, and that was exactly what I did (not). The French find smiling "for no reason" strange and suspicious, so that was rule no. 1. Sure, they have the habit of staring. But rule no. 2 is that you should never stare back, unless you want to respond to a pickup. Also, I had been told to maintain a very neutral facial expression. In addition to this basic lesson in deportment, I have learned a little French, including PG-13 phrases—and this, my dearests, I don't need to elaborate on.

'In spite of'

Before you begin to think that I casually take a cab ride home everyday, let me tell you that I have learned to take the public transport. And before you say, "*O, ngayon?* Okay *lang*, Paris *naman* e," ... stttoppp! Things get interesting here! People say if you can survive in Paris, you can survive anywhere in the world. Impossible? Believe it. No other form of commuting can beat the lovely Metro experiences you can get here for free (when you get the chance to pay less or nothing at all, take advantage). Since I arrived in Europe three months ago, I have had several risky, but extremely amusing, commuter encounters. I just know I will one day get arrested for carrying a pepper spray, which is illegal here (a friend from Kuwait thoughtfully gave me one).

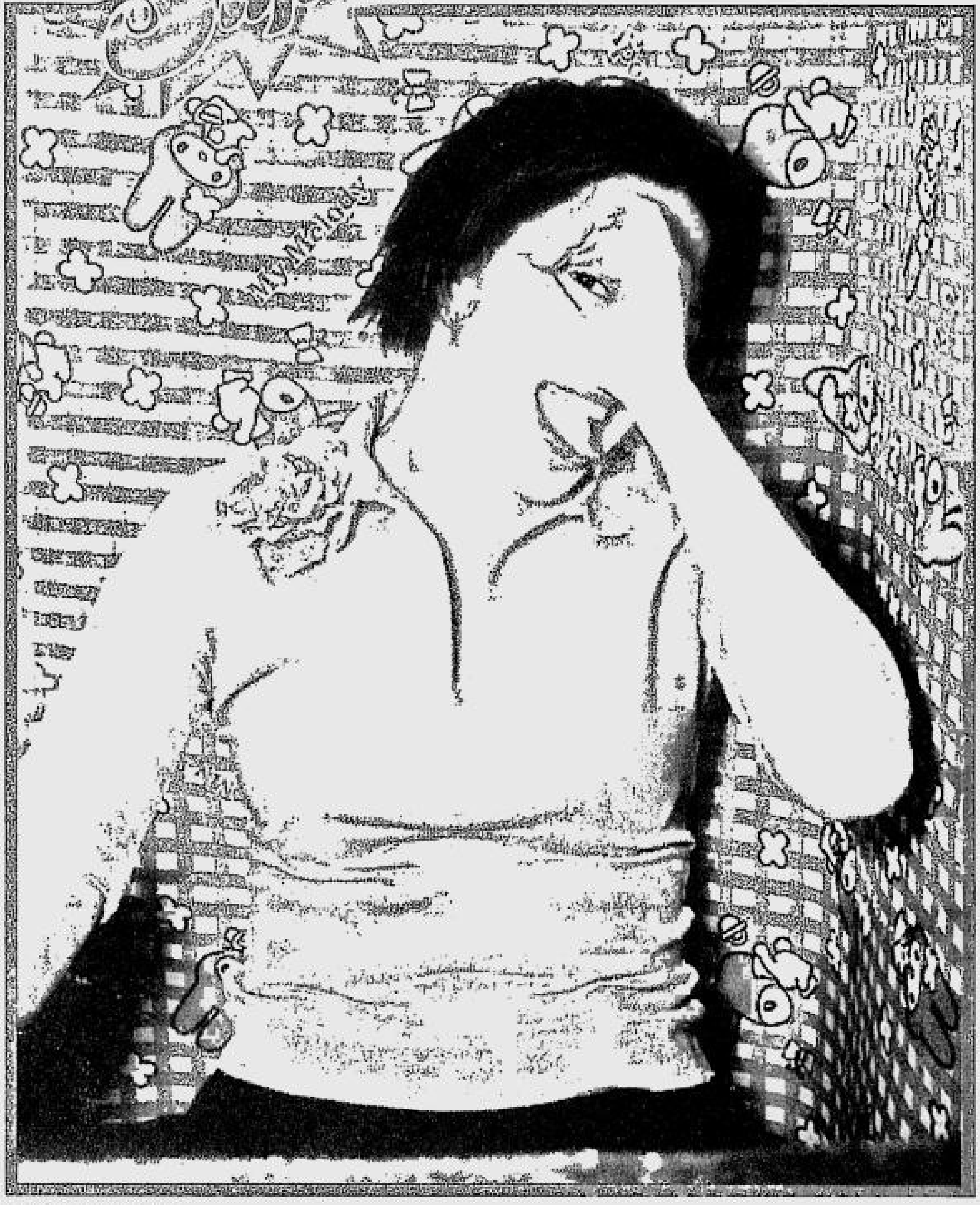
I once came home after an evening Math class with a leg drenched in rhum after drunken Arabic-Italian men rammed each other against the doors of the train and launched into a fit of little-boy wrestling matches that didn't quite end on a very wholesome note. Although there is usually no need for the spray around here, I must admit I am enormously relieved each time I step into the little dollhouse that I call home! Yes I live alone, and to that I say have faith in terrain unknown.

Today is a good day. God sent an abundant supply of extra *doux* tissues to help out with my cold, and although I was a little bit deranged this morning (I almost placed my shoes in the refrigerator), I was certain there would be, as there always is, something magical in the city that will help me get through the day. My most cherished girlfriend told me over a long-distance phone conversation: "Happiness is not because of; it is in spite of."

So, in spite of the spirit of Manila being vacuum-packed inside me, I am happy that it is there at all. Manila it was that first taught me to smile, to love, to connect, to embrace people and laugh with them. And it's what makes it warm in here, especially on days like this one, when I feel my head is right about to freeze up and snap off my neck.

'Til another Saturday then ... here's to Truth, Beauty, Freedom and Love!

This is a truly beautiful city, with cobblestone streets that have the power to make you want to click your heels in the air.



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How do you sing 'Walang himala!'?

People who haven't seen Nora Aunor's 'Himala' can now see a singing and dancing version of visionary Elsa

Text by Walter Ang
Photos by Darwin Chiong

VERY few Filipinos probably haven't heard of the movie "Himala." Directed by Ishmael Bernal from a script by Ricky Lee, it is the story of Elsa (played by Nora Aunor), a barrio lass who claims to have seen the Blessed Virgin Mary and throws her village into a holy frenzy.

But while almost everyone has heard of it, how many have actually seen it? Most Super! readers were still in diapers when the movie was shown in 1982. And it's impossible to find a VHS or VCD (even Betamax) copy. Cable television screening schedules are hard to come by.

But now people who haven't seen the movie will finally get a chance to experience the phenomenon that is "Himala" although in a different medium. "Himala" will be staged as a musical by Tanghalang Pilipino, the resident theater company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).

YOU CAN DO MAGIC. You can do anything that you desire ...

Artists involved in the new project stress the enduring relevance of the 20-year-old material. "It is about the different kinds of poverty we face: economic, emotional, spiritual. It was the scenario back then, it's still the scenario now. Even more so," said Lee, who reworked his original screenplay into its present permutation. "Himala" is about our search for something to believe in, whether it is religion, or an *artista*, or a politician or a Judiel Nieva."

Drop of rain

Lee added, "It is still entertaining. As a musical, it is not *mababaw* or gimmicky compared to the kinds of entertainment we have today. It's high time we have theatrical experiences to balance what we see on TV. It's like drops of rain in the desert. And we need more drops."

The scriptwriter revealed that, even when he was writing the screenplay, "I wanted it to be a musical from the very beginning. It's partly borne out of my frustrations to be a singer, at least here I can write the lyrics."

When Tanghalang Pilipino provided the opportunity to stage the production, Lee promptly met with director Soxie Topacio. The two gave shape to the libretto while Vince de Jesus composed the music.

"The challenge, of course, is how to translate it from screen to stage," said Topacio. "The casting was the first hurdle. Since we are staging it in CCP's intimate Batute Theater, how do we portray the people of Barrio Cupang? The crowd is a major character in itself. The movie had 3,000 extras. My final casting ended up with 15 actors. The challenge is now with my actors. They will not just do double roles, but more! For their quick costume changes, I told them, '*Gumawa kayo ng himala!*'"

The theater production may be a scaled-down version of the film, but Lee and Topacio said the resulting product is "more honest, more fun, more experimental" and actually offered "more freedom to explore the heart of the story." To enhance the setting, Topacio is working with choreographer Jay Cruz, lighting designer Jonjon Villareal and New York-trained set designer Gino Gonzales, who did the set design for the recent musical "Honk."

Stepping into Nora's shoes

The plum role of Elsa went to a singer with powerhouse lungs, May Bayot, often called the "sister of Lani Misalucha." Bayot has performed on stage in "Rama at Sita" and, most recently, "They're Playing Our Song" with Lea Salonga.

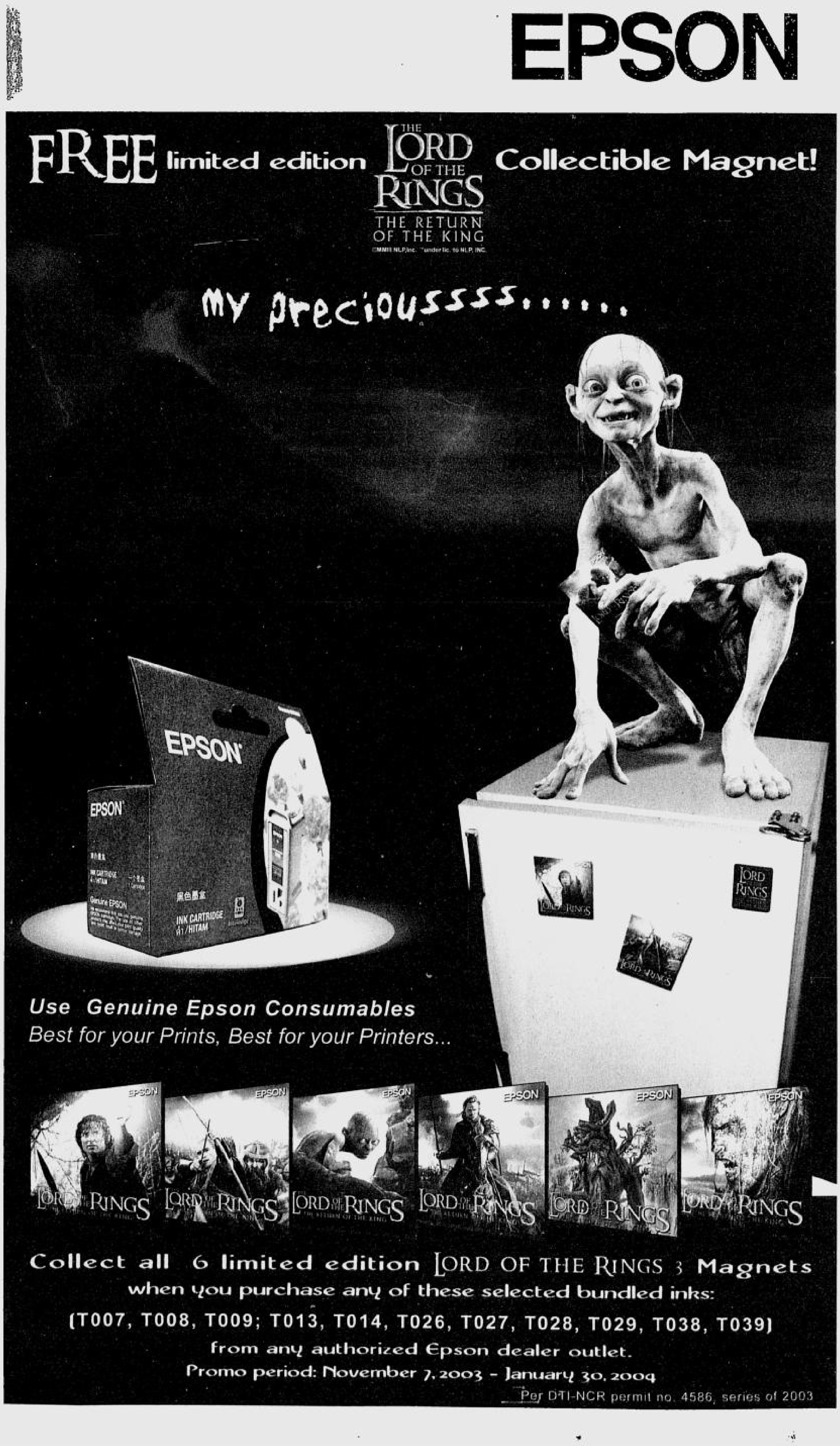
The singer said she was concerned about the physical demands of the role. "*Na*-tense *ako* but Soxie and Ricky told me not to be limited by the appearance of the character," she said. Topacio explained, "Everyone remembers Nora as soft, quiet, petite, frail. May comes on very strong, but Elsa does not have to be soft, after all, not all visionaries are soft. Look at Joan of Arc! Also, the musical is not trying to become the movie. It is different."

"My conflict is how to attack the role," said Bayot. "This is theater and *di pwede ang* eyes-eyes *lang*! I told myself when I got the role, '*Grabe ito!*' So I am finding my way through the role. We try things out during rehearsals; it (the role) evolves and we find new things. *Masaya siya* (Topacio). Soxie is always fun to work with."

As for the singing required by the role, Bayot said, "It is difficult. It is not like Broadway where it is grand and there is a simple pattern that the audience can easily pick up. The music can be compared to the works of Stephen Sondheim—beautiful to hear but very difficult to sing. As actors, we have to listen to it over and over again to let it sink in and so we can understand the text in relation to the music."

But composer De Jesus and Bayot go way back, having performed together abroad as part of a quartet. "When he found out I got the role, Vince adjusted the range for me because he knows my capabilities," she said then added in jest, "I think he made my songs even harder!" Lee is enthusiastic about their lead star. "I first saw May perform in a Burt Bacharach retrospective concert. *Ang husay husay niya! Wala na akong narinig* after she sang."

"Himala," the musical, runs for three weekends starting Nov. 7. Call 8323661 or 8321125 local 1620/1621, except Mondays.



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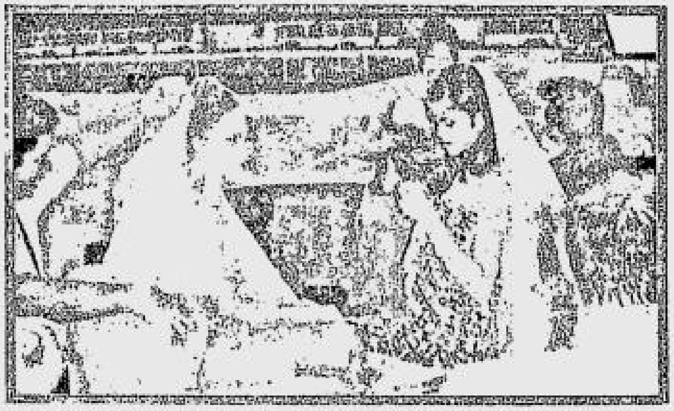
SATURDAY Super

Behind the sins

COMMERCIAL *MUNA TAYO!* The four foxy femme fatales take a break



THE GURU. When taking off your clothes, focus from the center within.

Shooting four certified hotties at the mall, on a helipad, and at a gas station where unstoppable usis clambered up a forklift for a free show.

By Jenina Alli

Producing a calendar is like a box of chocolates ... laced with napalm. You never know what's gonna explode in your face. It could be a light fuse, the weather, flight delays. It could be—heaven forbid—the sales.

The success of the 2002 Assunta da Rossi calendar by FHM Philippines pumped up the pressure for the following year. So we at FHM went for not one, but three poster girls. With Maui, Aubrey, and Diana, we flew to the tropical paradise that is Bohol where, for days, at 8 a.m. sharp we would be off to some beach, cave, forest, or waterfall, unsure of where to plug in for electric power, and whether or not the sun would go bust on us.

As the last quarter of 2003 rolled in, another quandary kicked in: "Who's next?" Now we have the answer.

This latest FHM calendar serves up a quartet of certified hotties. There's calendar vet Diana Z again; Juliana, the girl with legs that go all the way to her jugular; sweet and bedimpled, but all-woman Myles; and Francine, the towering Chinese *tisay* neophyte.

Wicked idea

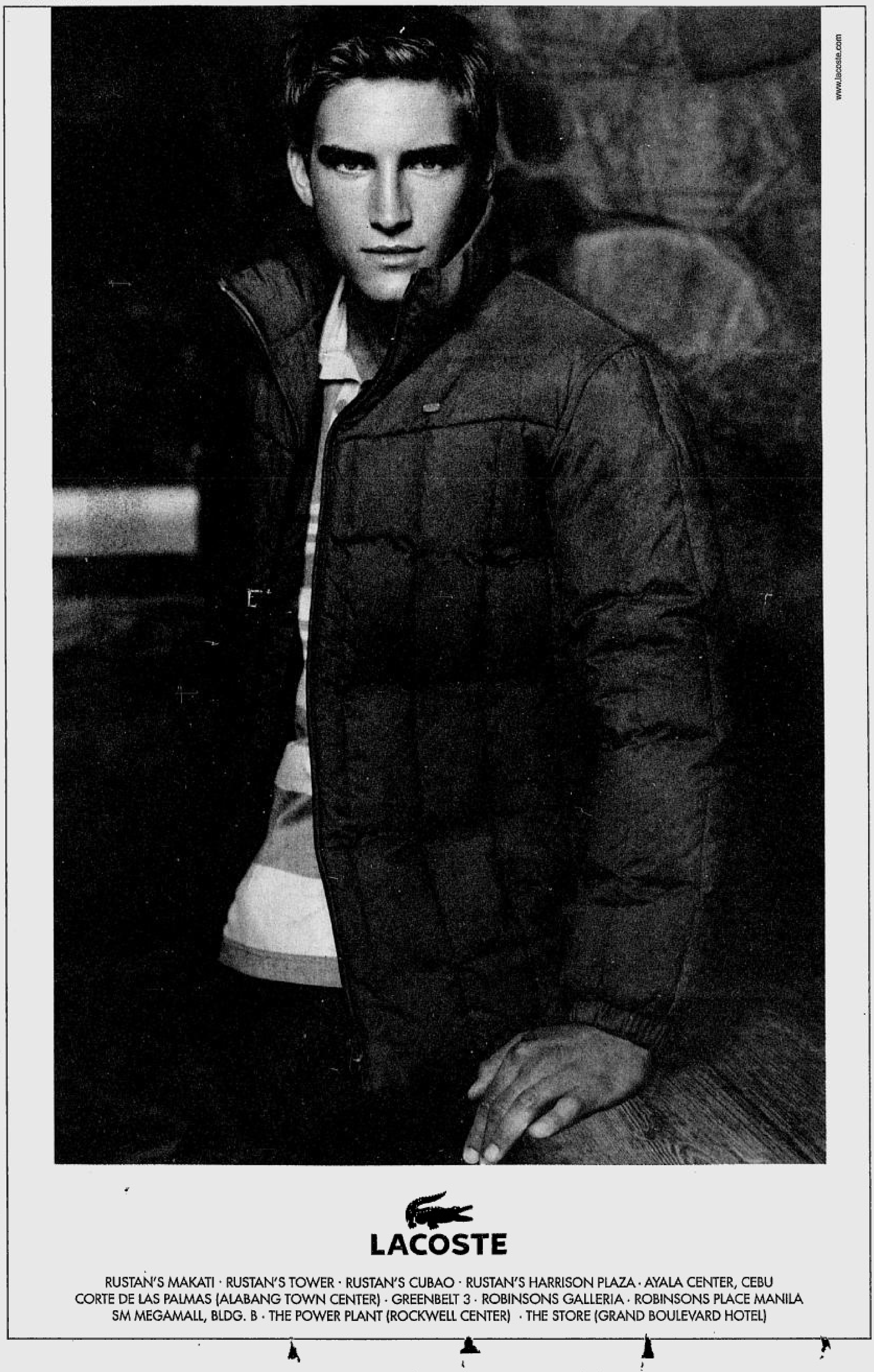
Since the water-and-sand backdrop was fast becoming a cliché, someone pitched: what if, instead of trekking to some exotic locale, we shot right in the city? In photographer Xander Angeles' words, "Skin City." Editor-in-chief Eric Ramos threw in the unifying factor: "Babes on Wheels."

It was a wicked idea.

The first shoot was at Robinsons Galleria. Post-mall hours, we had Myles and Francine in various states of undress without the benefit of the NCR's entire male population dishing out cat calls. Next day, we were set to do Juliana on a helipad, with an ice cream cart. But big fat storm clouds let loose a downpour, and we had to reschedule. On the new date, the sun shone grudgingly.

BEHIND/ M2

ROCK N' ROLLERS. This is how they look before the shoot.



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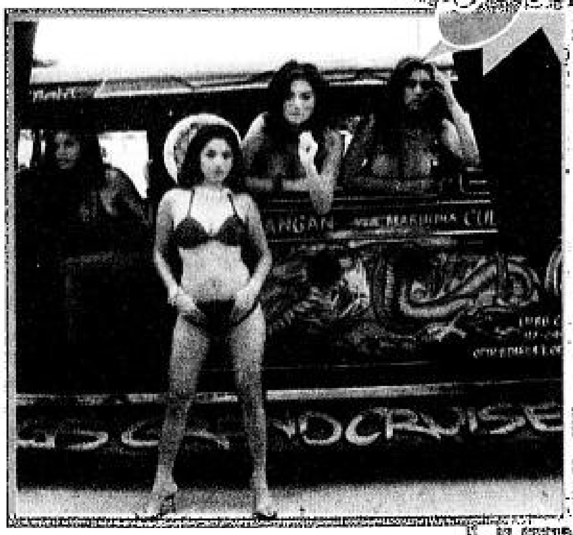
SILANGAN
FHM 2004 CALENDAR

PARA, MOMMA! *Bawal ang sabit dito.*



BARYA *lang po sa umaga.*

Behind the sins

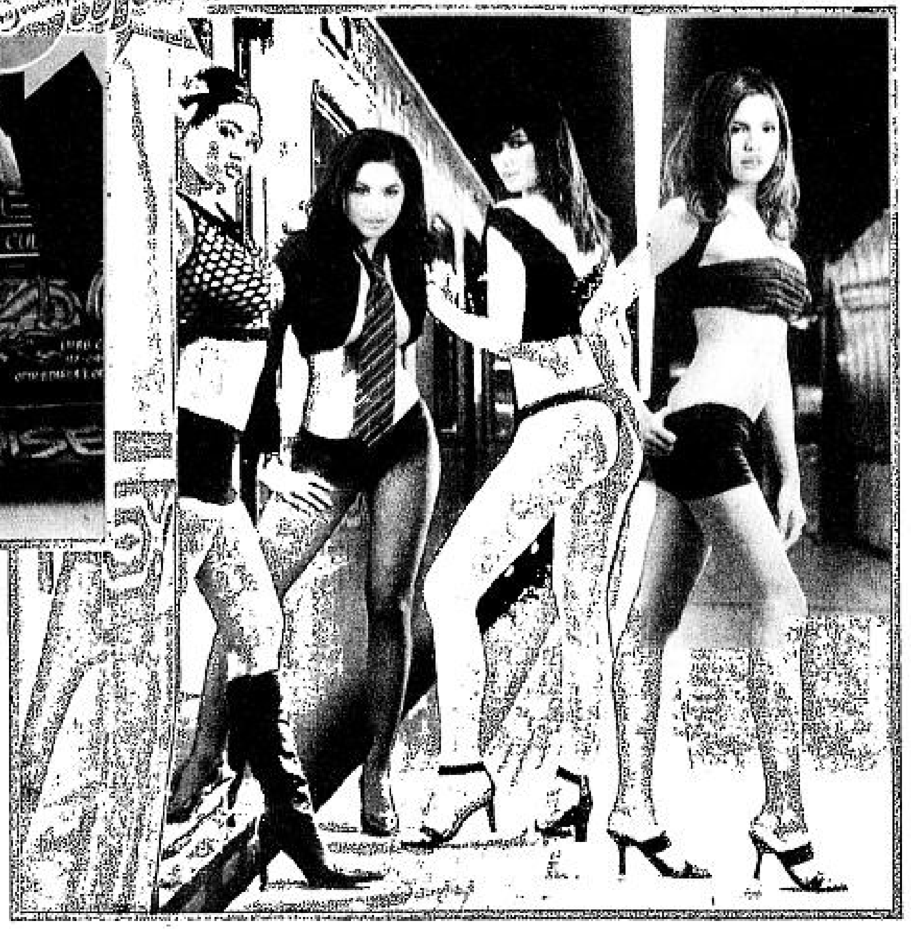
From page M1

The other shooting days went on more or less smoothly, despite the requisite oglers. Speaking of requisites ... We had to see to it that Myles had her yogurt, Diana had *sinigang* for lunch, Juliana had ice cream and cake after dinner, and Francine was comfortably seated all the time (she gave the guys a complex with her 5'11" frame).

One standout shoot was Diana's at a gas station. We cordoned off the area and even had an oil tanker park in front to block the view of onlookers who had started climbing rooftops and Meralco posts. And just when we thought we had a Peeping Tom-proof set, an assistant said, "Um...ah, they have a forklift."

That was to say, a forklift bearing incorrigible Pinoy *usis*. Talk about surreal.

HERE COME THE BRIDES. All undressed in...



MAIDEN RAIL TRANSIT. Before (below), and after (above)—care for a ride?

Boracay goes Italian

So what if it's not summer? Here are two more reasons to hit the beach

THE DISTINCTIVE aroma of olive oil, seafoods and Feta cheese wafts in the air with the tropical breeze beckoning visitors to sit down and relax for a hearty meal.

The cooking can very well be mistaken for that of Mediterranean Italy. But the restaurant is much, much closer to home—Aria Cuccina Mediterranean, on the island paradise of Boracay.

Aria's kitchen is the domain of Gino Amodio where he diligently whips out classic signature dishes from coastal Italy that have hooked many first-timers, turning them into regular patrons.

Gino gives three good reasons why a visit to Aria should be a part of every Boracay vacation. "The location, the ambiance, and of course the cuisine."

Aria sits along the beachfront in D' Mall D' Boracay, right at the heart of the island's commercial district. Easily accessible to shoppers and beach strollers, the cozy, airy interiors designed by Gil Coscoluella irresistibly tempts Boracay-goers to lounge and laze around for an extended breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

Among the culinary delights that have kept people coming back to Aria for more are Gamberoni Alla Greca, sautéed prawns with feta cheese, tomato, and basil; Costolette D' Angello Alla Rosa Marina, grilled lamb with rosemary flavor; and Polletto Al Forno, baked chicken with garlic and rosemary.

In order to entice patrons all year around, Gino constantly experiments in creating up to four or more new dishes every week. An indispensable aid for Gino in creating genuine pizza is the authentic handmade wood-fired oven that was built in the Aria kitchen by Italian chef Giuseppe Genco. It is one of only two such ovens used in the country today.

Handmade wood-fired ovens, which are widely used in Italy until today, cook the pizza from the top as opposed to conventional ovens wherein the cooking heat comes from the bottom.

When putting pastas and main dishes together, Gino sticks mostly to herbs, vegetables, capers, anchovies, seafood and olive oil. These raw materials are the basic building blocks of the cuisine abundantly available in the coastal Mediterranean regions of Italy as well as Boracay.

Aria is the brainchild of radio executive Juan Elizalde in partnership with Paolo Occhionero, an 18-year veteran in the restaurant business. Given the mixed local and foreign makeup of the Boracay population, these entrepreneurs recognized an opportunity to attract customers through authentic Italian dishes.

"The ultimate goal of Aria is to deliver the highest quality Italian-Mediterranean cuisine on the island of Boracay while keeping our prices reasonable and competitive with all establishments on the beachfront," Elizalde concludes.

BLUER THAN BLUE. Drink your blues away at Aria in Boracay.

Café With A View

CAFÉ del Sol, the newest coffee shop to open in Boracay, gives people a whole new reason to go to the beach.

People flock to the island paradise to escape the cramped crunch of the urban jungle. Now they have the freedom to enjoy the sun and sea, and have their coffee too. Café del Sol serves up world-class Italian brews, from espresso to brewed coffee, cream frappe and coffee frappe, in a cozy ambience just like the coffee shops in the big cities minus the annoying sight of traffic outside.

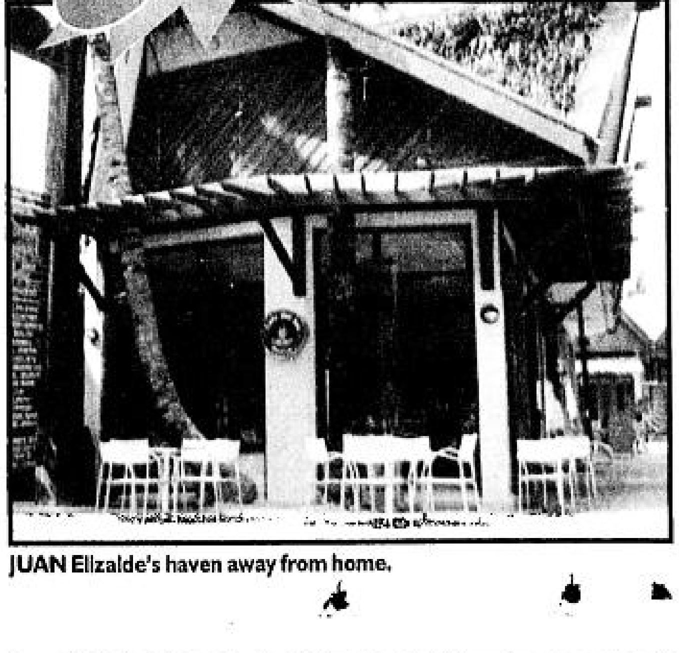
Coffee lovers are treated to a spectacular view of pristine white beaches, coconut trees swaying in the breeze, people strolling on the sand and the golden glow of the Boracay sunset.

This place allows people to sit back and chill out with friends after a day at the beach or the mall. Diners can enjoy a wide variety of Panini sandwiches and freshly baked cakes and pastries to go with their coffee. For the non-coffee addicts, there are relaxing tea infusions and fresh fruit juices.

Café del Sol is located along the beachfront at D'Mall in Boracay.

FOAMY FOR YOU. Get wet with this coffee concoction.

BITE ME! I'm all yours.



JUAN Elizalde's haven away from home.

Nada Blanca

SWAK!

by Lex

I AM not a deranged fan. I do not stalk my *artista* idols convincing myself that they are in love with me. I do not write long, obsessive letters to show biz personalities hoping for a televised greeting in response. However, I admit that like many others, I often feel an attachment with the people I see on TV.

Can you blame me?

After years of watching the same programs in the privacy of your home it is easy to think you know the characters you see onscreen. This is, after all, why celebrities keep winning political elections, because viewers often confuse the actors' real and reel personas. Have you heard the urban legend about Muslim rebels firing at the screen while watching an FPJ movie because they thought the villains were about to kill him? Heck, even Ah-nuld, with a non-existent track record behind him, managed to pull it off!

Mother to the masses

One lady who crept into my life via television was Nida Blanca. As a child of the 1980s I grew up on "John en Marsha" where Dolphy and Nida were Mama and Papa Puruntong. Together they dealt with family problems in ways that made audiences laugh and cry, and love them in the process. Millions of fans were drawn deep—and then deeper—into the intricacies and issues of the ideal television family. The Brady Bunch paled in comparison!

When you think about it, the Nida that we saw for the last time was a complete contrast to the radiant, bubbly characters she used to portray. Now, two years after she left, her senseless death remains a mystery.

Land of forgetting

I have always believed in the Filipino proverb: "*Kung may gustong gawin, maraming paraan; kung ayaw gawin, maraming dahilan* (if you want to do it, there are many ways; if you don't, there are many excuses)." In my opinion—and Nida's daughter Kaye Torres seems to agree—the government let the prime suspect free without even putting him through a trial because they put the case on the back burner. The sad reality is that bringing Nida's killer to justice will not translate to votes for anyone. Maybe that's why the political interest on the matter has been so uninspired. In contrast, it took only a day for congressmen to gather enough signatures to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. Apparently, some things can still be accomplished quickly in this country, and only when our leader's personal agendas are at stake.

The case has remained unsolved, maybe because bringing the legendary actress' murderer to justice will not translate to votes for anyone

I wonder if it is true that a person's soul can proceed to heaven only when the mysteries behind his death are unraveled? I would hate to have Nida roaming the earth for much longer just because of the inefficiencies in the system. The case may be over but that doesn't mean that justice has been served.

Some people claim that the Philippines is the land of forgetting. I'd like to think otherwise. Surely there is a comedian, basketball player, action star, or newscaster in the political bunch with an ounce of compassion left in his system, who will not let this issue disappear into the black hole of the unimportant past? For now though, I'll keep hoping.

(For comments e-mail: swak@info.com.ph)

WE miss you Mom!

MERCY for Marsha ...

Perks and freebies with new debit card

HOW would you like to shop, dine and enjoy a night-out in the hippest places in Metro Manila and enjoy tons of freebies, discounts and invites to fun and exclusive parties as well? You can get all these with the MTV Debit Card.

Designed to meet the lifestyle aspirations of the young, this great new card is honored in these establishments: Mossimo, TGIFridays, Café Mediterranean, The Spa, Bistro 110, Cheesecake, etc., Le Donne, Bioessence, Ducks Unlimited, Maldita, Dickies Jeans, BNY Hipshop, Pipers Wine & Bar, Leaveland/B Club, Topshop, Chef & Brewer Café and Restaurant, Cinderella U2, Cinderella Esprit, Cinderella Nafnaf, Cinderella British India, Lhasa, Limited, Pazzo, Piu Pazzo (Oliver Branch), Silverworks, Apple & Eve, Sari-Sari Cafeteria, Sushi-ya Japanese Restaurant, Scarlet Fashion Center, Island Photo, Photoline, Ratsky, Seiji Restaurant, Aruba Bar & Restaurant, David's Salon, Rever, David Forever, Red Salon, David's Day Spa, Odyssey Music & Video and Souk. The list is still growing.

The new MTV Debit Card is a cashless payment facility that functions both as a purchase and an ATM card.

You can also use this as an ATM card, where cash withdrawals are honored in ATMs worldwide.

Those interested in applying for a card may visit any Equitable PCIBank branches and kiosks.

The MTV Debit Card was launched yesterday at the Glorietta Activity Center at a party hosted by MTV VJs KC Montero and Patty Laurel.

For more information, log on to www.equitablecard.com/mtv.

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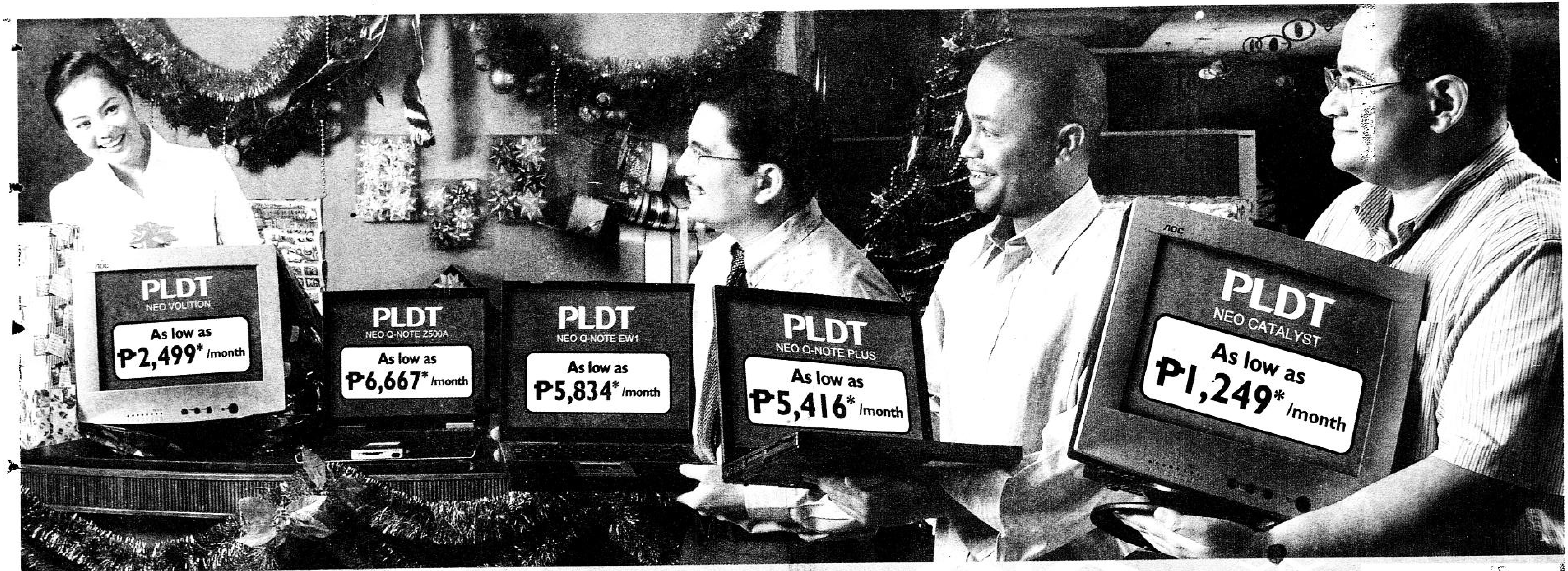
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SATURDAY Super

PHOTO BY RAYMUND ISAAC

6'0"
5'6"
5'0"
4'6"
4'0"
3'6"
3'0"
Deone
Honeylet
Guines
Brent
Abie
Rex
Rona
David
James
Jan
Marga
Bjorn
Janice
Jonas
Charisse
Janet
Melissa
Olivia
Geraldine

Super!Friends

By Tim Yap
Photos by Joan Bitagcol

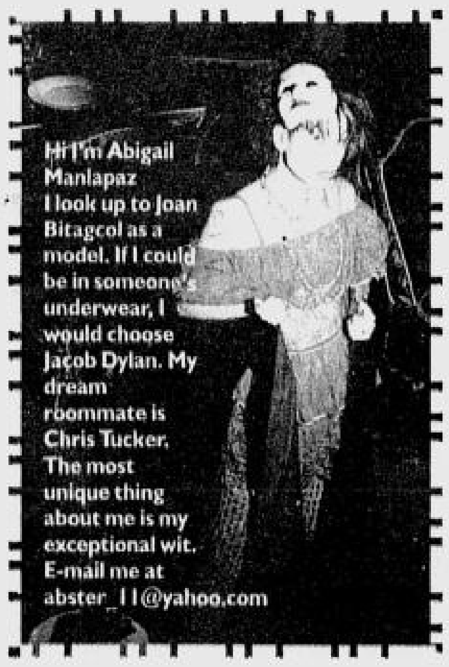
The fairest of 'em all

The scene, Prince of Jaipur at The Fort. The cast, The MTV Fashionista Best Model of the World contestants. The scenemaster, director Robbie Carmona with supermodel and photographer Joan Bitagcol.

Spice it up, cool it down.

Wanna join our fold? E-mail us with a few lines about yourself, add your photos and send to super@inquirer.com.ph

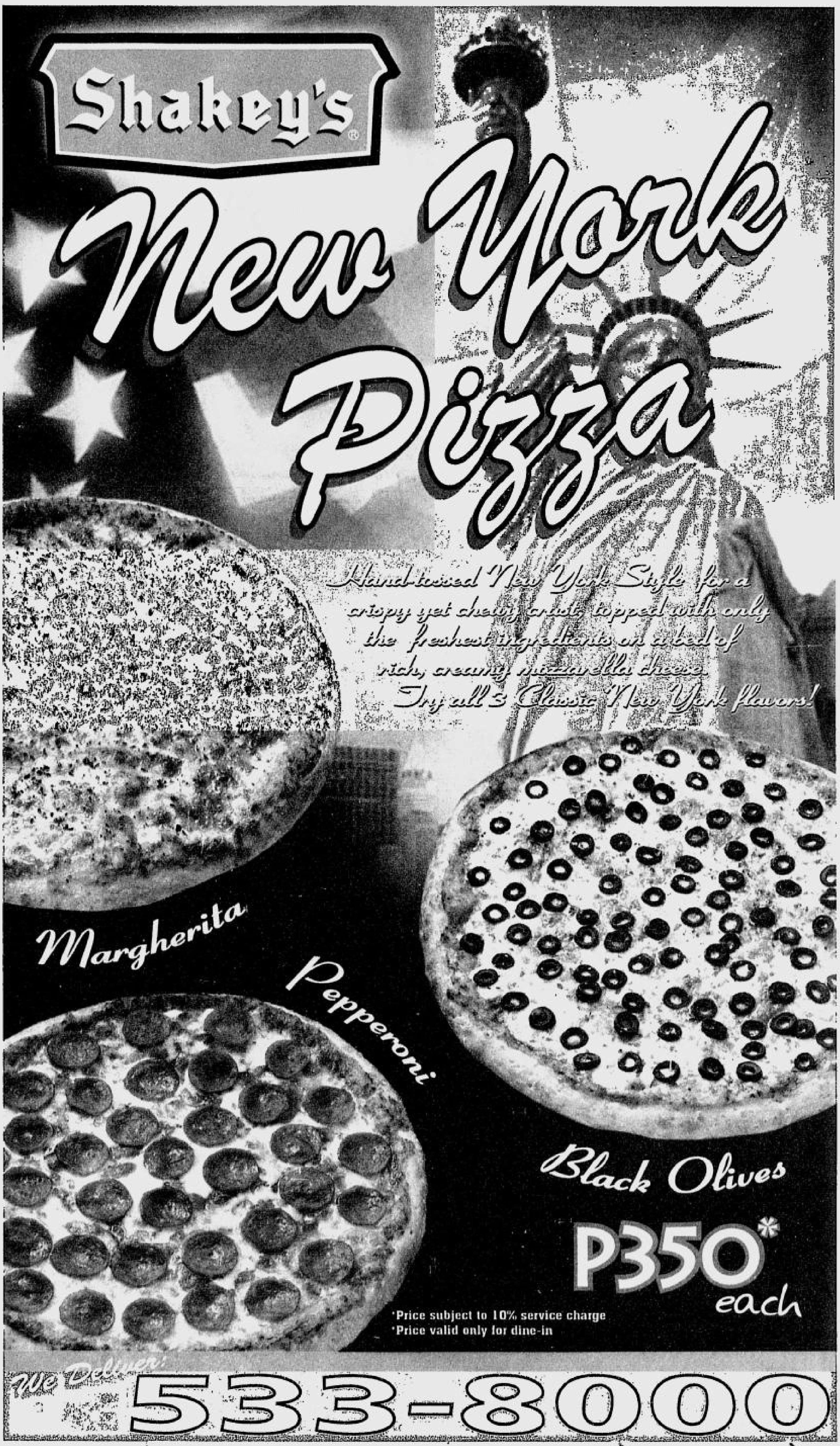
[illegible] I look up to Stella Tennant, Caroline Ribeiro as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Laetitia Casta, Stella Tenant Guys: Kalani Ferreira. My dream roommate is any of the Ateneo Blue Eagles basketball team People don't know that I am naughty The most unique thing about me is that I'm very driven. E-mail me at zak_jak2001 @yahoo.com



Hi I'm Abigail Manlapaz
I look up to Joan Bitagcol as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Jacob Dylan. My dream roommate is Chris Tucker. The most unique thing about me is my exceptional wit. E-mail me at abster_11@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Ria Bolivar
I look up to Kate Moss as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Marc Nelson My dream roommate is my guardian Angel People don't know that I am funny The most unique [illegible] about me is my [illegible] to keep quiet [illegible] the chaos E-mail me at [illegible]@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Raphael Kiefer
I look up to Ashton Kutcher as a model.
Ifil could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Fred Durst
My dream roommate is Jennifer Love Hewitt
People don't know that I am friendly
The most unique thing about me is my character
E-mail me at Ahab_33@hotmail.com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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAY Super
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2003

"MY vision is to see the Filipino on the world fashion ramp," says director Robbie Carmona, whose Saga Events is mounting the "MTV Fashionista Best Model Search" for the third straight year.

For months, Robbie and his crew went around campuses, malls and clubs searching for the next batch of mannequins that we'll see in ads, billboards and various campaigns.

The result? These 24 hopefuls on our Super! pages, shot exclusively by supersuper-model Joan Bitagcol in a transition mode from catwalk to camera. (She's been learning from ace lenswoman Lilen Uy.)

Super! is always proud to train the spotlight on fresh talent, so here's Joan's debut.

DRAMA QUEENS The ladies in waiting at the lounge of Prince of Jaipur at the Fort.

Tim Yap

fashion er force!

Top mannequin Joan Bitagcol, in her first exclusive shoot with Super! points her lens at 24 model hopefuls for the upcoming 'MTV Fashionista Best Model Of The World' finals

MEN AT ARMS Men are the new women—so go ahead, take your pick.

"I see a lot of potential in this batch—a lot of tall girls," observed Carmona. Ever the fashion mover, Robbie works fast, churning out fashion shebangs right and left but never forgetting to take a step back and finding opportunities for him to give back to the industry that has been kind to him.

He sees BMW (Best Model of the World) as good training ground for fashion's next set. Though none of the past years' winners have reached supermodel status (yet), most are kept busy with countless ramp jobs, shoots and other gigs. "These days, everyone wants to be a model."

The MTV Fashionists winner gets to compete in the international pageant set in Istanbul, Turkey. So who among these mannequins will clinch it? Find out this Monday night, at the NBC Tent.

Work it.

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Hi I'm Guiness Nabong
I look up to Colin Farrel as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Beyonce Knowles. My dream roommate is KC Concepcion. People don't know that I like making people smile. The most unique thing about me is I spray peppermint on my pillow before I sleep. E-mail me at guiness_16@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Olivia Daytia
I look up to my parents as a model.
If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Princess Diana. People don't know that I am a very private person. The most unique thing about me is I am a very organized person. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Geraldine Despi
I look up to Julia Roberts as a model.
If I could be in someone's undies, I would choose Brad Pitt. My dream roommate is Paolo Montalban. People don't know that I am crazy. The most unique thing about me is being extremely generous and naughty.
E-mail me at
bmw2003_candidates@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Melissa Frye
I look up to Maricris Perez as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Nick Carter. People don't know that I am a good badminton player. The most unique thing about me is my height and my ass. E-mail me at mhe_01@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Janet Reyes
I look up to nothingness as a model. If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Richard Gere. People don't know that I can be really bad!!!! E-mail me at sweetanet@yahoo.com

Hi I'm James Bautista
If I could be in someone's undies, I would choose my own. My dream mate is Heidi Klum. People don't know I'm acrobatic. The most unique thing about me is my modelling skill. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Bjorn Andrew Engler
If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Christopher Reeves
My dream roommate is Heart Evangelista, Whitney Houston
People don't know that I am shy & kind
E-mail me at grutzifix@freesurf.ch

Hi I'm Marga Rosal
If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Marilyn Monroe. My dream roommate is Elvis Presley. E-mail me at bump_64@hotmail.com

Hi I'm Brent Javier
If I could be in someone's undies, I'd choose Travis Fimmel. My dream roommate is Adrianna Lima. People don't know that I am homesick for Canada. E-mail me at brentjavier@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Ian Casem
If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Pres. Bush. The most unique thing about me is I am intellectual. E-mail me at xti_100777@yahoo.com

Hi I'm David Costales
I look up to Marc Nelson as a model. My dream roommate is Bea, Heart Evangelista. People don't know that I'm shy, not *suplado*. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates@yahoo.com

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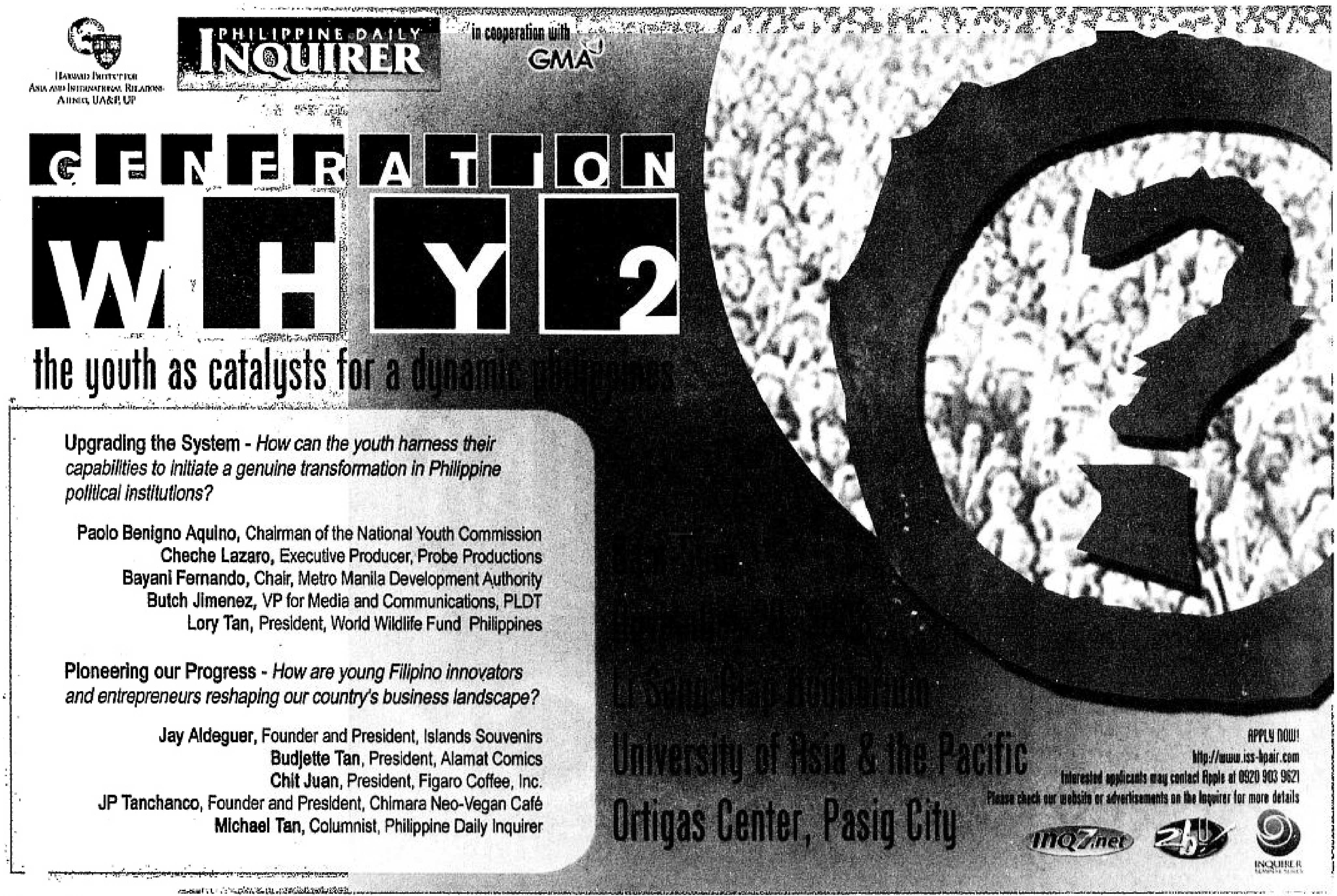
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Upgrading the System - *How can the youth harness their capabilities to initiate a genuine transformation in Philippine political institutions?*

Paolo Benigno Aquino, Chairman of the National Youth Commission
Cheche Lazaro, Executive Producer, Probe Productions
Bayani Fernando, Chair, Metro Manila Development Authority
Butch Jimenez, VP for Media and Communications, PLDT
Lory Tan, President, World Wildlife Fund Philippines

Pioneering our Progress - *How are young Filipino innovators and entrepreneurs reshaping our country's business landscape?*

Jay Aldeguer, Founder and President, Islands Souvenirs
Budjette Tan, President, Alamat Comics
Chit Juan, President, Figaro Coffee, Inc.
JP Tanchanco, Founder and President, Chimara Neo-Vegan Café
Michael Tan, Columnist, Philippine Daily Inquirer

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Hi I'm Charisse Ocrisma
My dream roommate is John Hall. The most unique thing about me is I can do handstands. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates @yahoo.com

Hi I'm Deone Dasallas
I look up to Tyson Bedford as a model. My dream roommate is Liv Tyler. The most unique thing about me is my character. E-mail me at deone_dasallas @yahoo.com

Hi I'm Rhona Salvador
People don't know that I am weird and that I am really different from how they know me. E-mail me at rhona_6@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Jeffrey Quiambao
My dream roommate is Jennifer Lopez. The most unique thing about me is my body. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates @yahoo.com

Hi I'm Janice Moriente. I look up to Marina Benipayo and Joan Bitagcol. People don't know that I am a model E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates @yahoo.com

Hi I'm Dayal Chowdhary
If I could be in someone's underwear, I'd choose Beyonce. The most unique thing about me is I'm romantic. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates @yahoo.com

Hi I'm Rex Arce
My dream roommate is Beyonce. People don't know that I'm a computer geek. The most unique thing about me is I'm very sensitive. E-mail me at rexmachine @hotmail.com

Hi I'm Honeylet Gascon. I look up to Carolina Kurkova. If I could be in someone's undies, I'd choose Fred Durst. Most unique thing about me is I'm a good ball player. E-mail me at hellyann@yahoo.com

Hi I'm Jonas Leviste
If I could be in someone's underwear, I would choose Antonio Banderas. My dream roommate is Heart Evangelista. E-mail me at bmw2003_candidates @yahoo.com

THE DENIM COLLECTION

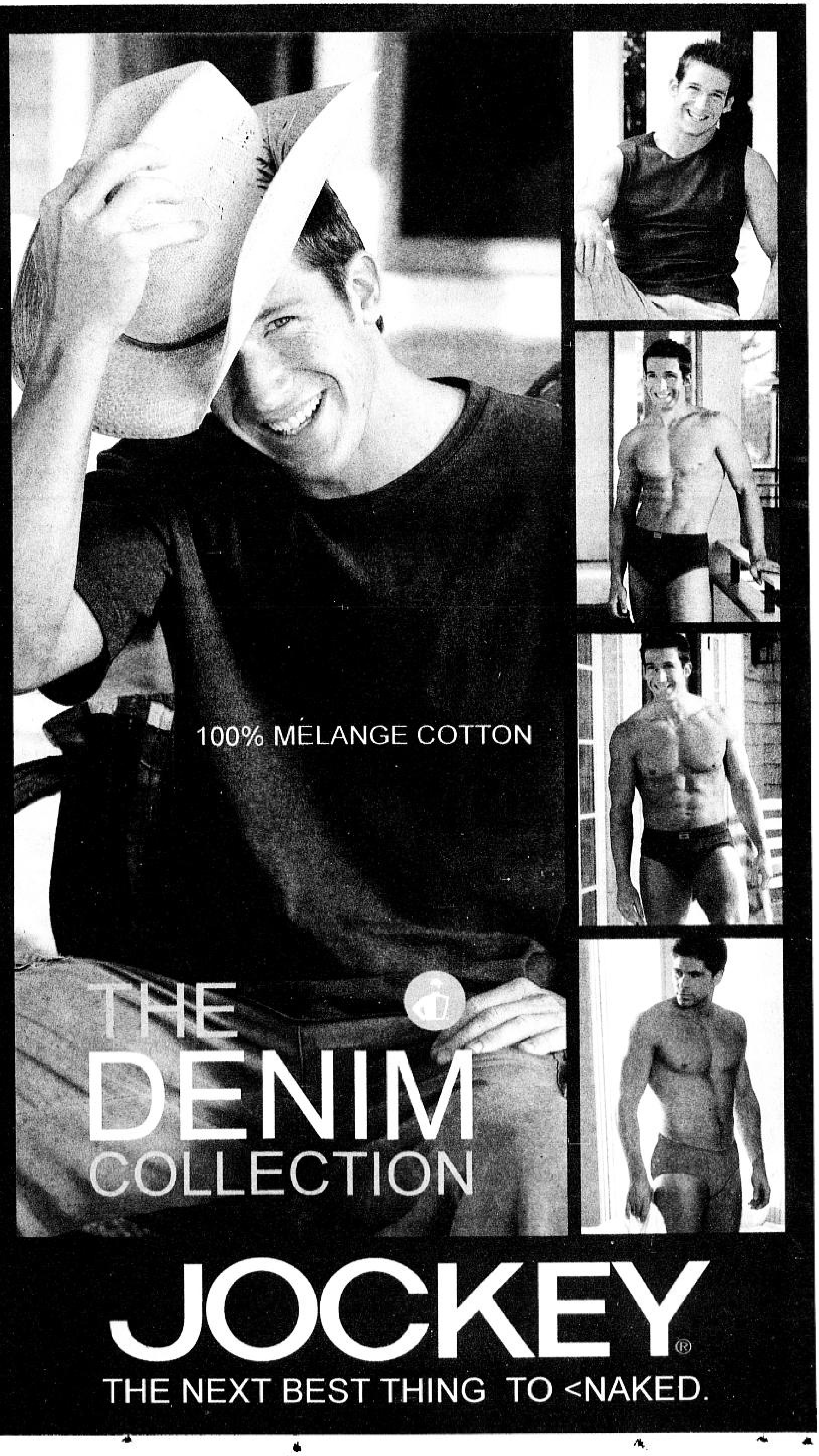
What is the attraction and undying love with denims all about? Is it the instinctual bond with our western counterparts? Or the cowboy idealism that taunts and haunts us from the wild wild west? The denim craze not only continues to be timeless but seems to be taking off on an adventurous gallop. The Jockey man is now donning his crotch with a new look: The *Jockey Denim Collection*. Each style has been tailored to fit the male physique in comfort and appearance where it matters the most. The collection showcases briefs, a crew neck t-shirt and sleeveless muscle tee. Signatured with a leather patch, every piece produced under the *Jockey Denim Collection* has a miniature replica of an authentic leather patch used in the classic denim jeans.

We all know that our denim jeans gets better with age. Same holds true for the durability of the denim collection except, the denim collection simply doesn't age: reinforced with bar tacks, and 3 needle stitches at major points of strain (much like the way classic jeans are made) this makes it able to withstand maximum wear and tear adding a longer life to the garment.

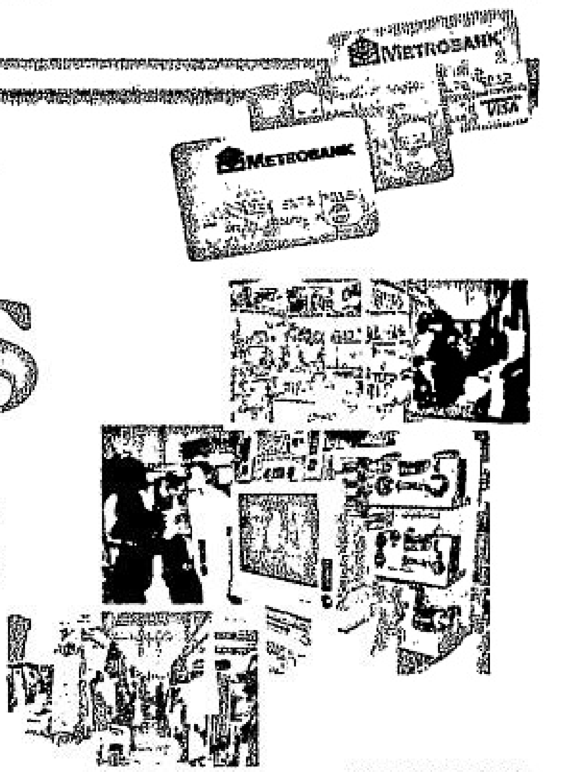
To achieve the authentic true blue denim shades, Jockey uses specially selected 100% cotton mélange dyed yarn which is then processed into denim faux. The rugged look stops there— after that its comfort all the way. The fabric undergoes a special treatment process to give it the soft cotton feel on the skin, just like the brushed effect used in denim jeans. The elastic waistband is made from Lycra® spandex to ensure softness, heat resistance and long lasting washability and wear. It will also help prevent rashes or irritation around the waist region, commonly experienced by men. So although it may not be made of the same denim fabric used in jeans it has the colors and all the features one would look for in a long lasting pair of jeans.

The *Denim Collection* is ready for an underwearable show-down. Each garment is guaranteed to endure the perilous, dust breathing lifestyle of a cowboy. One wonders what the likes of Billy the Kid and Wyatt Earp would do if they were caught with their pants down.

JOCKEY®
THE NEXT BEST THING TO NAKED



Get the best gifts this Christmas at a one-stop shop


PHOTOS BY IUN CAPULONG

MAKE your holiday shopping experience an easy and enjoyable one. Getting gifts for family and friends is something to look forward to every year. Surprise them with the best gifts you can get without emptying your pockets.

The Metrobank Credit Card's Shopping City, which is located at Le Pavillon, Metropolitan Park, in Roxas Boulevard, which runs from now until Nov. 16, will transform you into a smart shopper. This one-stop shopping bazaar has everything that you'll ever need, not just gifts for loved ones, but for yourself too. So be armed, be informed on how you can make the best of your time, and Metrobank Credit Cards with MCC Shopping City.

When shopping, you must have a strategy. Avoid shopping in random because more often than not, you'll find yourself exhausted before the day ends. Because the MCC Shopping City has everything for everyone, arrange your list by category.

There is a wide range of items on sale at very affordable prices at the bazaar. You can get mom fashion accessories or something she would enjoy for the house. Or if dad would like to be a little generous, he can find jewelry and appliances at MCC Shopping City.

Ladies can choose from popular imported and local brands of fashion apparel, bags, shirts, tees, and accessories. While you can get your male pal some sporting goods. Techies cannot be left behind because there are digital cameras, computer items, handy cams, and much more to suit their needs.

The trendy teenagers will have a field day with various designs and brands of hair accessories, bead and crystal bracelets, and hip bags that are of export-quality. The male teens, on the other hand can enjoy cellphone accessories and other electronic gadgets.

And Christmas shopping will never be complete without the toys! Of course, kids always have that special place in every shopping haven. The kids will have a choice of his or her favorite cartoon character items. There are Harry Potter novelties, Disney Characters, and Power Puff toys too, among others.

There is also a good mix of affordable and high-end priced gift ideas. From P100 shirts to collector's item porcelain dolls exported to Europe which are sold at around P3,000-P4,000 for a 12-inch tall doll.

With all the various available gift ideas at the MCC Shopping City and discounts up to 75-percent, one will surely find the perfect gift for family and friends.

After the frenzy of shopping for gifts, shoppers can satisfy their hunger at the Food Tent. Selected food concessionaires have been tapped to provide mouth-watering meals to hungry shoppers.

Parking is never a problem at the MCC Shopping City. There is ample parking space around Le Pavillon. Plus, for a minimum P1,000 purchase, you get a free 9-point car checkup at Toyota shops in Marikina, Cubao, Manila Bay, and Dasmariñas Cavite, regardless of the make or model of your car.

So visit the Metrobank Credit Card Shopping City and make your Christmas shopping a truly exciting and enjoyable experience with your .family and friends.

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Up to 75% off. 0% interest on all appliances on installment.

It's back! The Metrobank Credit Cards Shopping City. Find the perfect gift in a one-stop shop. Pick from a wide selection of world-class products to touch your loved one's heart.

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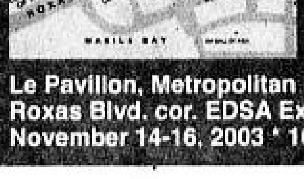

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Metrobank
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-573 Series of 2003

Our cardholders speak out

CIROS Tomacruz, president, Beca Worley Enterprises. He has two Metrobank Cards—a MasterCard and a Visa—both cards he's been enjoying for several years already.

"At first I had no intention of shopping at the bazaar, I just went along with my wife. My perception was that it was just a woman's world, but when I saw the variety of appliances and gadgets available, I had a great time too. We went to the bazaar every day."

Tomacruz said he was surprised when he was able to charge to his Metrobank Card even a very small amount at the bazaar.

"When I say small amount, we are talking of less than a hundred peso purchase. In other bazaars when paying in card, surcharge is added to the purchase but not with Metrobank's bazaar. I think it is only Metrobank that offers zero interest installment on appliances in a bazaar."

Edward Isidoro, executive vice president, International Baptist College in Mandaluyong.

Isidoro has a Metrobank Credit Card since 1999. He has since used his card at the Metrobank Credit Cards Shopping City for purchase of most of his home appliances such as TV, VCR, refrigerator, and washing machine.

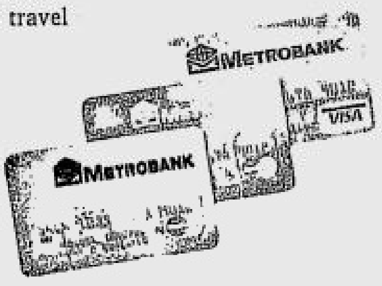
He said the Metrobank Credit Card is a convenient card to use and has a lot to offer to people such as the 0-percent interest rate on the purchase of appliances. "It's a very convenient card. Not only do I use the card for normal purchases, but I can also rely on it during emergencies."

Lydia Ancheta, a broker, has had a Metrobank Credit Card for six years now. She owns two cards, a Metrobank Visa Card and a Metrobank MasterCard.

She always frequents Metrobank Credit Cards Shopping City and the place has been a source of home appliances, Christmas decors and other fashion items such as bags.

"I'm satisfied with this card when I use it at the bazaar. I availed myself of the zero-percent interest rate for an appliance that I paid in six months. The card is so convenient, I also use this when I travel outside the country."

> 'When I say small amount, we are talking of less than a hundred peso purchase. In other bazaars when paying in card, an additional surcharge is added to the purchase but not with Metrobank's bazaar'



Go cashless

FINDING it hard to go Christmas Shopping with wads of cash in your pocket or your bag? The Metrobank Credit Cards Shopping City makes it much easier for you to shop this season.

At the MCC Shopping City, enjoy the convenience of cashless shopping as all booths have credit card terminals installed. Aside from these, shoppers can load prepaid cards that can be used while sifting through the best gift ideas available at the MCC Shopping City. It's shopping convenience at its best. The prepaid cards are so easy to use. Just go to the designated loading stations and have the amount you wish to spend loaded. Now you're ready to shop! When paying, simply have your prepaid card swiped and that's it! If you still have credit left after buying all those items, you can have any unspent amount refunded.

Metrobank Credit Card cardholders are also offered double rewards on bazaar purchases. So the more you shop, the more points you earn, the sooner you can redeem your dream reward!

The bazaar also has special promotions for smart shoppers like you. Purchases can be converted to installment at 1.25-percent interest rate provided minimum purchase amounts to P3,000 and the monthly amortization should be at least P500.

And to make it even more exciting, prizes will be raffled off every 30 minutes.

So don't miss out on this much awaited shopping experience. The MCC Shopping City is until Nov. 16, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Le Pavillon, Metropolitan Park, Roxas Boulevard corner Edsa extension.

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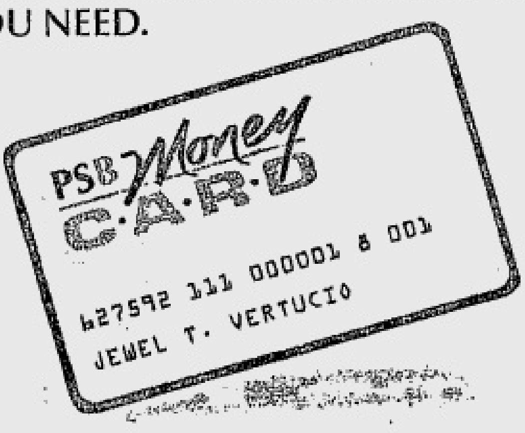

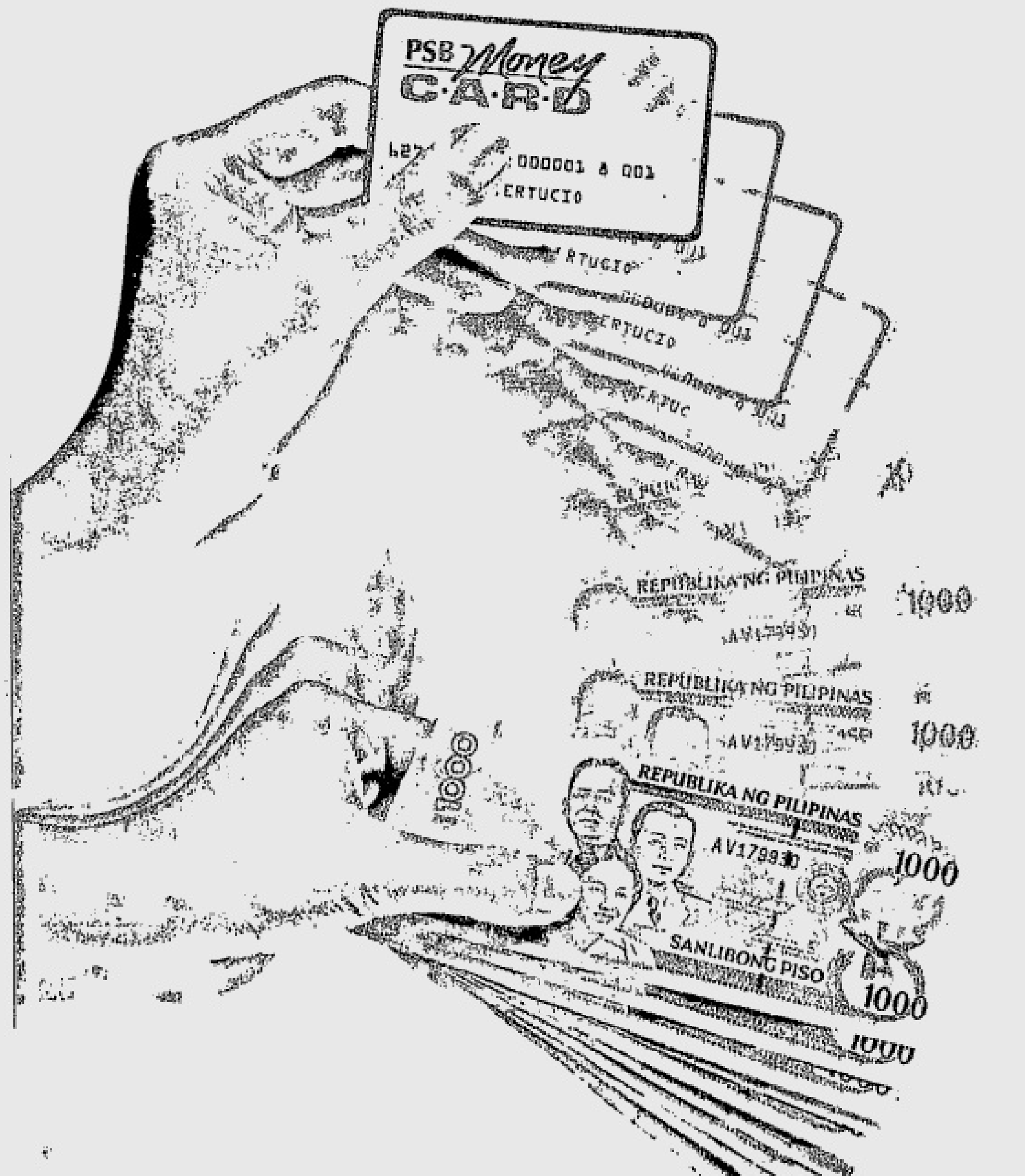

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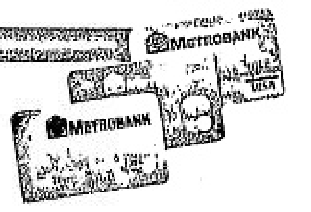

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METROBANK DOWNTOWN CENTER TOPS 'GAME'
Metrobank Card Corporation (MCC), the credit card subsidiary of Metrobank, recently awarded Metrobank Downtown Center (MDC) for having the most number of approved Metrobank Credit Card referrals for the month of August under MCC's card solicitation program dubbed GAME or Get-A-Member & Earn. Receiving the GAME incentive from MCC are MDC branch head and senior vice president Melinda Ching (right), Central Bank Representative Arwin Cruz (third from left), and executive secretary Omega Ong (fourth from left). Also shown are MCC president Cynthia Valenzuela, MCC vice president for sales Emelito Verde, and MCC first vice president for customer service Raydes Pestaño.

AT THE MCC Shopping City ribbon-cutting (from left) George S. K. Ty, chairman, Metrobank; Cynthia Valenzuela, president, Metrobank Card Corp; Paul Skiadas, executive director, MCC; Mary V. Ty, assistant to the chairman, Metrobank; Milagros Drilon, Mary Jane Abacan and James Go, executive director, Metrobank.

METROBANK, ANZ BANK

Poised for leaps and bounds

METROBANK, the country's largest bank, and Australia New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. (ANZ) a leading financial services company based in Melbourne, are poised to make leaps and bounds in the Philippine credit card industry following a joint venture agreement they signed recently.

The two industry leaders combined their strengths, which is expected to establish a growth platform for the credit card business in the country.

In the joint venture, Metrobank sold 141 million shares of its credit card subsidiary to ANZ Funds Pty. Ltd., which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Australia New Zealand Banking Group Ltd (ANZ). The shares comprised 40 percent of Metrobank Card Corp's total equity of which 60 percent remain with Metrobank.

ANZ managing director for consumer finance Brian Hartzer said leveraging the complementary strengths of ANZ and Metrobank through the joint venture was strategically attractive for both organizations.

"The combination of Metrobank's customer base and distribution channels coupled with ANZ's cards expertise creates an opportunity to develop the Philippines' best credit card business," Hartzer said.

Metrobank EVP Arthur Ty also affirmed that the joint venture "creates a distinct top-tier credit card business in the Philippine market with unique growth potential."

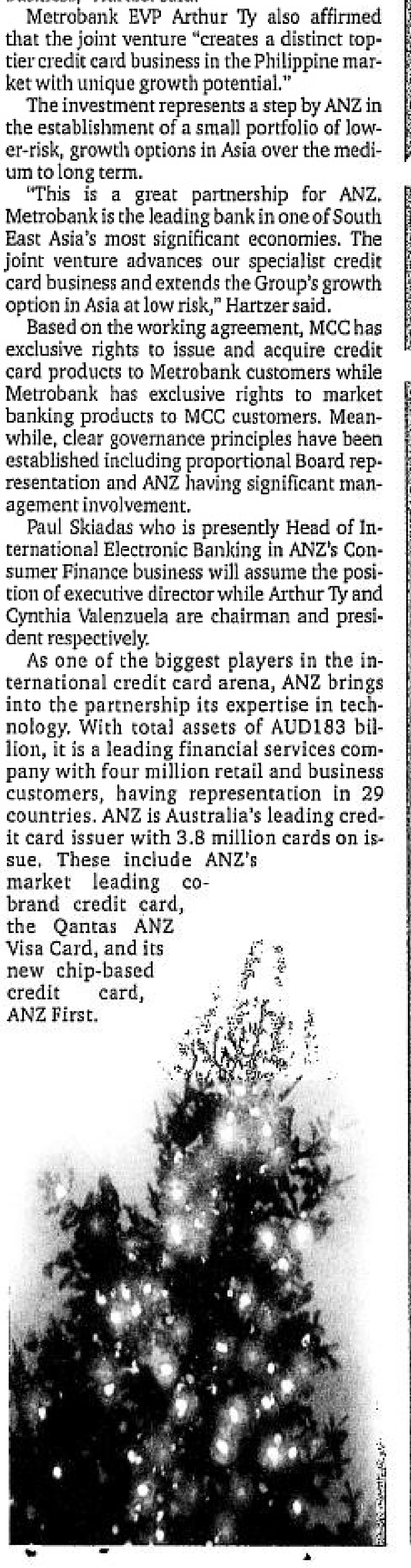
The investment represents a step by ANZ in the establishment of a small portfolio of lower-risk, growth options in Asia over the medium to long term.

"This is a great partnership for ANZ. Metrobank is the leading bank in one of South East Asia's most significant economies. The joint venture advances our specialist credit card business and extends the Group's growth option in Asia at low risk," Hartzer said.

Based on the working agreement, MCC has exclusive rights to issue and acquire credit card products to Metrobank customers while Metrobank has exclusive rights to market banking products to MCC customers. Meanwhile, clear governance principles have been established including proportional Board representation and ANZ having significant management involvement.

Paul Skiadas who is presently Head of International Electronic Banking in ANZ's Consumer Finance business will assume the position of executive director while Arthur Ty and Cynthia Valenzuela are chairman and president respectively.

As one of the biggest players in the international credit card arena, ANZ brings into the partnership its expertise in technology. With total assets of AUD183 billion, it is a leading financial services company with four million retail and business customers, having representation in 29 countries. ANZ is Australia's leading credit card issuer with 3.8 million cards on issue. These include ANZ's market leading co-brand credit card, the Qantas ANZ Visa Card, and its new chip-based credit card, ANZ First.



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Enjoy 0% interest on appliance purchases

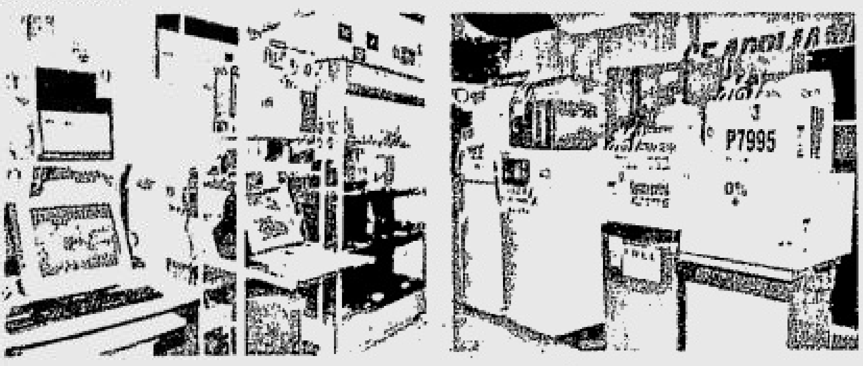
WITH the wide variety of gifts available at the Metrobank Credit Card Shopping City, it is also the only bazaar that offers appliances at 0-percent interest on installment plans.

It's the best time to upgrade or get the appliances you've always wanted to buy. You can get the best deals and the best brands at MCC Shopping City, Le Pavillon, Metropolitan Park, Roxas Blvd. corner Edsa Extension

Zero-percent interest is available on all appliances like flatscreen TVs, digital cameras, DVD or VCD players, stereo components, refrigerators, air conditioners, and a lot more.

The major participating brands are Philips, Pioneer, Sony, LG Collins, Keppel Fedders, General Electric, Moulinex, Ariston, Konka, and others.

The following dealers will be there to help you find your appliance needs: Abenson, Avid, Automatic, Anson's, Ambassador, and Western.



The major participating brands are Philips, Pioneer, Sony, LG Collins, Keppel Fedders, General Electric, Moulinex, Whirlpool, Ariston, and others

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Editor **Marge Enriquez**
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Copy Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
Art Director **Antonio Salac Santos**
Graphic Artist **Genie L. Lagman**
E-mail: pr_elan@inquirer.com.ph
pdi_elan@inquirer.com.ph

A vision of livable communities

Text by Avie Gochoco-Perez
Photos by Ava Lugtu
Pictorial direction by Antonio Salac Santos

Felino 'Jun' Palafox does not just dream of creating residential zones where people connect more with one another; he designs and builds them

INTERNATIONALLY renowned urban planner and architect Felino "Jun" Palafox Jr. rues that Filipinos, unlike many foreigners, walk too little. Studies show that Filipinos walk an average 400 meters only, or a measly five minutes a day. In contrast, people in Singapore—where the air is just as humid as ours—like Europeans, walk at least two kilometers daily.

What is the problem?

"We have no sidewalks and pedestrian lanes," Palafox says. "Also, maybe we're spoiled." He points to the proliferation of pedicabs, tricycles, jeepneys, and buses, which stop just anywhere to load and unload passengers.

A VISION/4

The most interesting people and personalities leave their mark in the pages of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine
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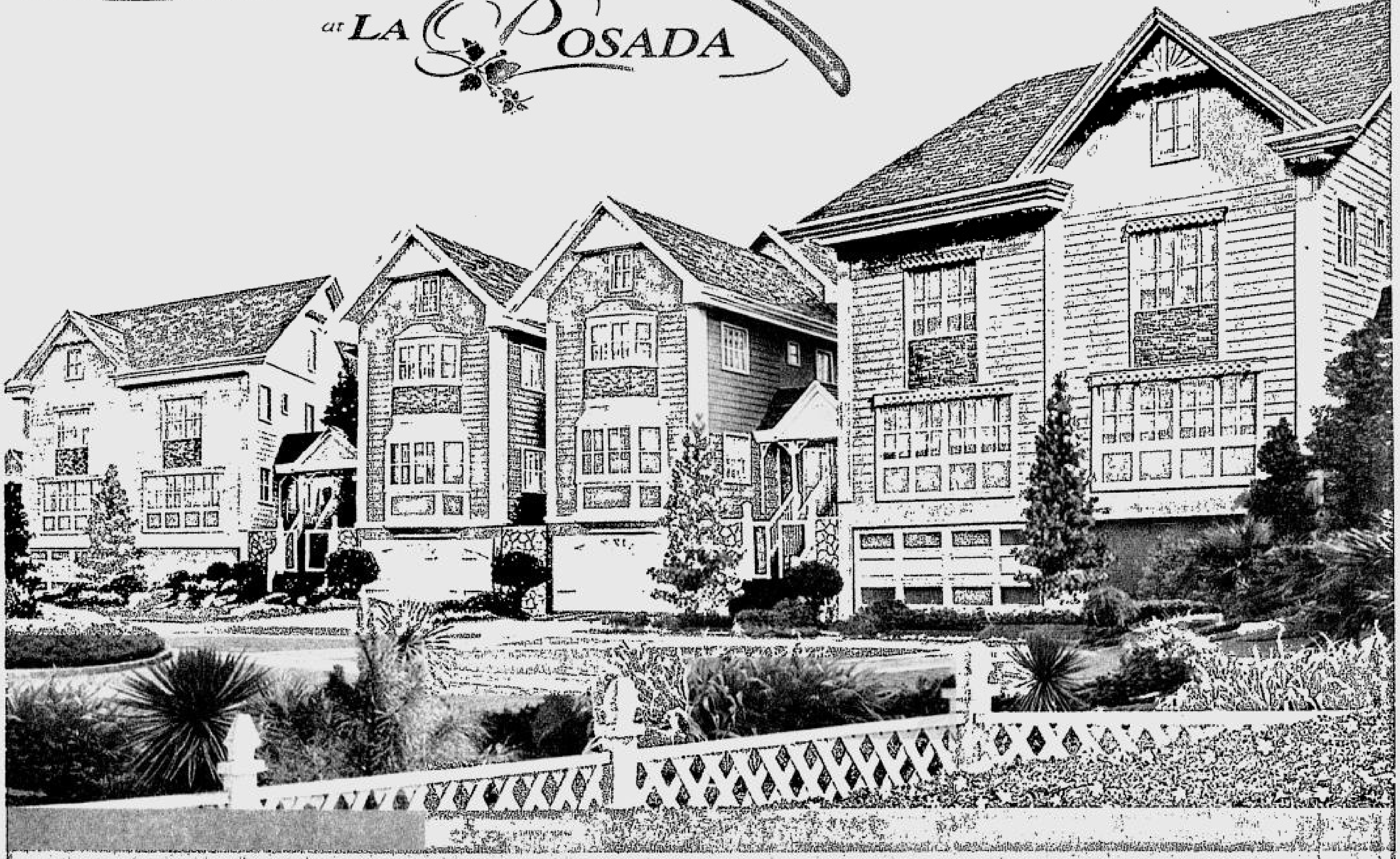
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

Victorianne at LA POSADA



First Taste of Success

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SURPRISE! Keep the flame alive with occasion treats.

MODELS: DOROTHY KRIEGEL AND ALEC DIERENDONCH, UPSTYLE AGENCY
MAKEUP: WILLIAM MONTOJO
CLOTHES: LYA ARMOVIT FOR RUSTAN'S AND ANTHONY NOCOM FOR SM

Think New England in the US East Coast, or Illinois in the mid-west, with shingled roofs, arches, bay windows and sidings

Brittany Bay beckons

THOSE who live in metro south are familiar with this patch of green by the side of South Expressway, almost opposite the interchange at Sucat. Not too long ago, colorful balloons greeted motorists where there seemed to be only wild terrain and *cogon* grass. Before then, only the serene view of Laguna de Bay beyond softened the landscape.

Today, the balloons are gone. In their place is a long, thick hedge of bougainvilleas. Behind the hedge is a castle of sorts. It is owner-developer Brittany Corp.'s very European way of welcoming visitors to Brittany Bay, a residential-cum-commercial "economic A-B" community.

Passing by that patch of the Expressway— manicured grass, blue flags dancing in the bay breeze, bright tropical landscaping—one is reminded of that giant billboard on Edsa corner Ortigas in the 1970s which sought to sell the exclusive village yet to rise behind it, saying: "If you lived here, you'd be home by now."

Sloping, sprawling

Brittany Bay sits on 35 hectares of "sloping terrain and sprawling greenery." A gated enclave, it currently has a handful of model homes, two of which have already been bought, according to a sales agent.

The flyer says Brittany Bay as a community will have residences, offices, restaurants and shops done in "Neo-Victorian" architecture and detail. The models look like houses in New England in the US East Coast, or those in Illinois in the mid-west, with their shingled roofs, arches, bay windows and sidings.

Arabelle, Chloe, Elliane, Lilac, Lorraine and Marcele--these are the model homes' names. Standard features are a front porch, two-car garage, modular kitchen cabinets, modular wardrobe closets and a service or laundry area. The smallest has a gross floor space of 155 sq.m. and the largest, 300 sq.m. Attic space is optional. Smallest lot size is 258 sq.m., and largest 491 sq.m. lot.

The window frames are powder-coated aluminum. The ground floor has cool-on-the-feet 40 cm x 40 cm tiles, while the second floor has warmer oak parquet underfoot.

Pricing, depending on lot area, ranges from P8.5 million to P12 million for house-and-lot packages, although the biggest unit, the Marcele, has been quoted by a sales agent at P16.1 million.

Dressed-up

Interior designer-sisters Ivy and Cynthia Almario dressed up the mid-sized model home Elliane in clean lines, using not only neutrals and beiges and lots of wenge for the furnishings but also strong, masculine blues and restful greens.

The master bedroom's special features are a walk-in closet and a bay window. The den also features a bay window. Attic space, if taken as an option, can be as large as the entire second floor or half of it, depending on the model unit chosen.

Because Brittany Bay is an entire community, these individual homes form only a part --though obviously the dominant part--of the residential portion called "La Posada." There are 92 lots set aside for these single-detached homes. Victorianne Row is a row of townhouses of the duplex (P4.9 million, 138 sq.m. floor area, 86 sq.m. lot) and quadriplex (P5.5 million, 126 sq.m. floor area, 68 sq.m. lot) type.

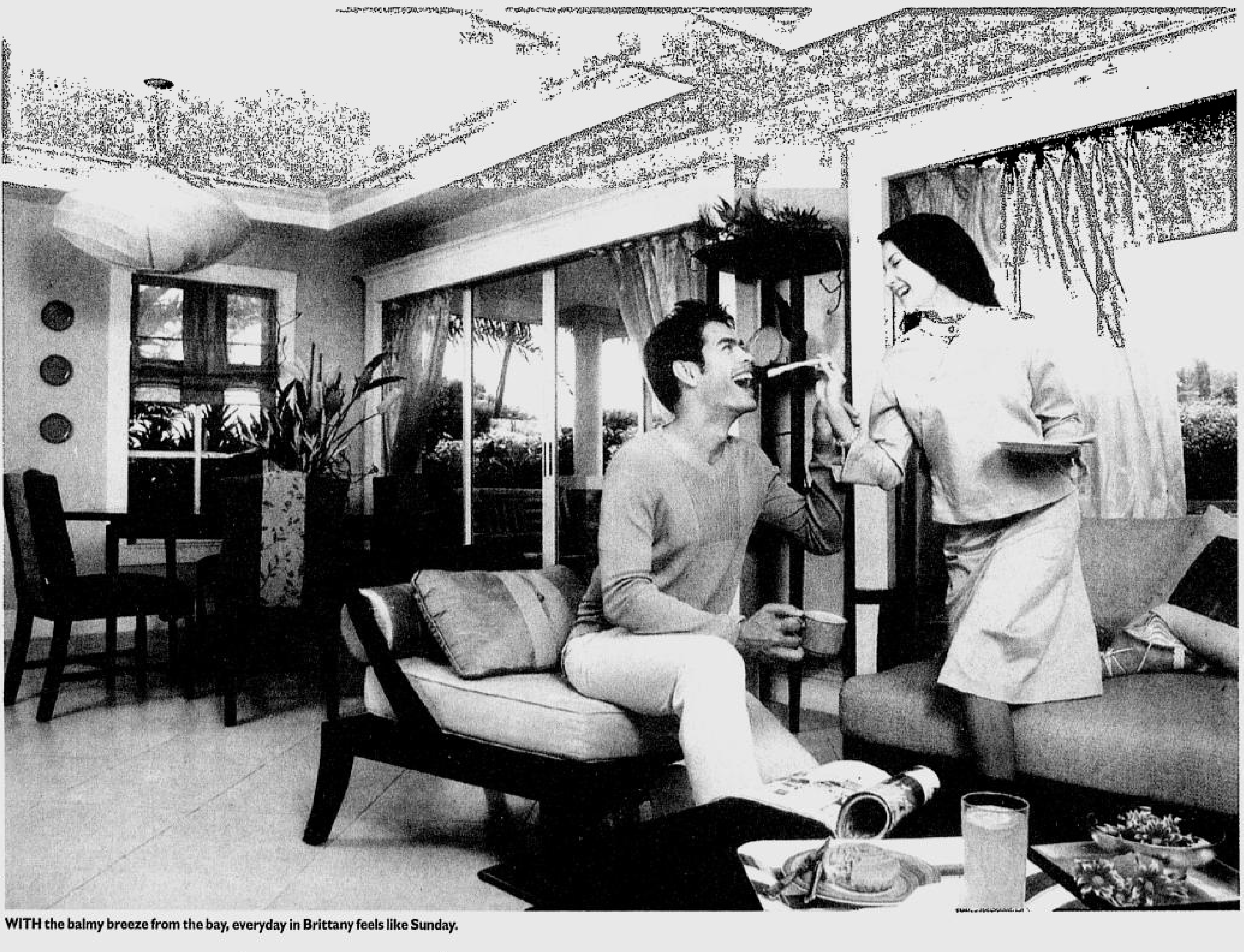
The last portion, called The Manors, will have 20-unit clusters. A unit in a cluster can be just a "pad" with one bedroom and a floor area of 65 sq.m., being sold for about P3.7 million. On the other hand, a two-bedroom "loft" unit with a floor area of 143 sq.m. sells for about P9.4 million.

La Posada's market, according to Brittany's corporate communications arm, are "those with a net disposable income of not less than P50,000 a month. Their spending is almost A-B."

Of La Posada, urban planner Felino "Jun" Palafox Jr., who did the overall concept, says: "The owner stayed away from the cookie cutter-type approach to selling house-and-lot packages. There is a certain uniqueness about this community--a stronger sense of place, a sense of 'arrival.' With the mixed-use development at La Posada, both residential and commercial centers are in one community."

With Brittany Bay, Palafox wants to change Filipinos' tendency to dismiss waterfront properties in the metropolis as "backdoor," or inferior pieces of land. "This is wrong," he says. "Abroad, waterfront properties have 50 percent higher value, higher even than golf fairway lots which have only 35 percent higher value."

The master planner sees Brittany Bay as "a reinterpretation of American architecture with European influence. "It brings to mind Martha's Vineyard and the seaside in Florida."



WITH the balmy breeze from the bay, everyday in Brittany feels like Sunday.

A touch of uscany

'A very nice southern Italian seaport town with rolling hills, a natural river, and lots of cypress and pine trees'

PORTOFINO in Alabang is one of the best-kept secrets of the metropolis, situated along a 30-meter wide or six-lane road that links southern Metro Manila to northern Cavite. It is to the south of Ayala Alabang, a little closer to Ayala Southvale. Work on the grounds is in full throttle, because lots in Portofino Heights (300 to 500 sq.m. cuts) are sold out, and attention is focused on another phase, Portofino Villas, which are ready-built homes (floor areas of 180 to 300 sq.m., lot areas of 200 to 450 sq.m.) "clustered in cozy communities."

"Portofino," which means "gateway" in Italian, could cover up to 113 hectares in the future, but for now it is a manageable 20-hectare master-planned community. A total of 15 hectares is being devoted to commercial mixed-use development. Owner-developer Brittany Corp. predicts that it will be a lived-in community by end of next year. Selling started last year at P11,000 per sq.m. Today, going price is placed at P12,100 to P12,500 per sq.m.

Target market is couples in their 40s whose net disposable income is at least P100,000 a month, with three or four children, one or two of whom are teenagers.

The village's model house showcases southern Italian architecture, Portofino being a "very nice southern Italian seaport town with rolling hills, a natural river in the foreground and lots of greens, such as cypress and pine trees," says Carmelo "Meloy" T. Casas of Recio+Casas Architects. The firm is designing the verticals of Portofino while Felino "Jun" Palafox Jr. of Palafox Associates did the horizontals or master planning.

Colorful clubhouse

The almost 2,000-sq.m. clubhouse named Monte di Portofino which Recio+Casas Architects has designed will be "very colorful," says Meloy. It will have "very European lines, small eaves ... it will sport Mediterranean colors such as red, yellow, burnt sienna ... roof tiles will be in terracotta."

Meloy is confident the clubhouse design and utility features will usher in a "new generation" of clubhouses. Where clubhouses in other villages would be just meeting halls put together, Portofino's will have a grand reception area overlooking a plaza, a village store, a very high-ceilinged ballroom, a 25-meter partially covered lapping pool with a children's pool right beside it, and changing rooms--aside from the administrative offices and pantry for catering activities.

At the plaza, there will be a multi-purpose outdoor function area that can serve as extension for the ballroom. Tents can be set up there for village fairs. Focal point of the plaza will be a piece of sculpture in a cascading fountain.

Along the perimeter of the lapping pool will be covered cabanas and areas for sunbathing. A gazebo will be the "lookout point" for the other features of the clubhouse--picnic grounds right beside the natural river, rest houses, and a children's playground.

Neighborly

The architecture of the clubhouse was "broken down into small masses" to relate it to the proportion of the houses nearby, thus making the clubhouse "neighborly," says Meloy. "It becomes residential in proportion and it also sets the tone for future residents' homes."

Second floor of the clubhouse will have a big landing-cum-lobby area. A gym will occupy one side, opposite three additional function rooms on the other side. The third floor is a roof deck where where functions can be held.

"We just finished the construction drawings. There will be a lot of arches and shutters," says Meloy. He believes construction will take less than a year. Of course the clubhouse will be for members' and residents' exclusive use, especially since the target market seems to consist of people who like throwing parties.

Nice details

The Giuliana model home (466 sq.m. lot, 624 sq.m. floor area) as designed by Recio + Casas is the "Tuscany" type, says Meloy. "Minimal, *wala masyadong borloloy* (not too many embellishments). A lot of small openings are controlled with nice detailing."

Interior design tandem (sisters, actually) Ivy and Cynthia Almario of Atelier Almario dressed up the Giuliana in a record two weeks, though planning took about a month and a half.

Tiles from Australia grace the home underfoot. They come with a 20-year guarantee and have only to be mopped clean, making them almost maintenance-free. The visitor's eye is inevitably swept up to the cathedral ceiling with high windows clad in vertical fancy drapery to further stress the height.

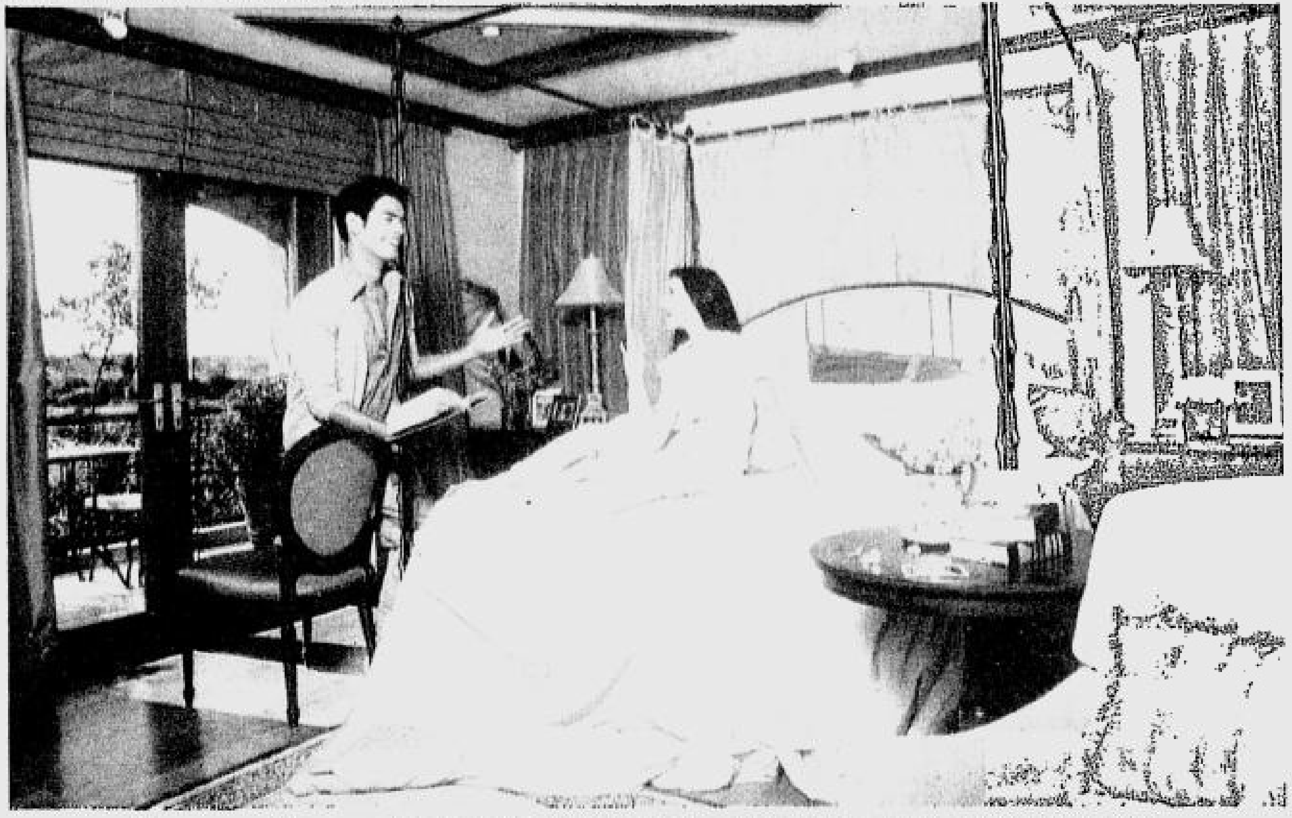
Luxurious furnishings in gold and champagne fabric, matched with a wrought iron center table and a unique armoire that can serve as entertainment center, complete the living room.

Upstairs, the master bedroom looks like it occupies a full third of the house with its toilet-and-bath and walk-in closet areas seemingly as big as the bedroom itself. The spaciousness of the master bath sharply contrasts, however, with the small shower stalls in the three bedrooms for the children.

Laura Ashley sheets and linen dress up the little girl's bedroom, while the one for a teenaged girl features an extra "bed" in a recessed space, for friends on sleep-over nights. Ralph Lauren sheets in blue do the trick for the boy's room, where the Almario sisters also placed pegs on higher-than-usual white chair rails wrapped around the room. Truly a practical move for boys' clutter.

Overall, the interior design feel is country, sans the too-feminine floral theme.

START the say right with romance and poetry.



LIVIN' La Dolce Vita. What's life without parties?

Interior-designing sisters Ivy and Cynthia Almario stick to formulas that are enduring, pleasing, and mostly minimalist

TWIN ENERGIES

SISTERS Ivy and Cynthia Almario's atelier in Makati welcomes you with hand-painted Oriental vases on the wall against a black background.

There is no overt sign that says you've reached your destination, Atelier Almario; you just know you've come to the right place because of all the artistry that oozes from this one spot in the otherwise plain, old building that it calls home.

The sisters are twins in terms of high energy, though Cynthia seems to be the more gregarious. However, it appears she defers to Ivy, whom she fondly calls "Sis." Ivy looks more serious, more reflective, though it has little to do with her cropped hair dyed a soft brown, in contrast to Cynthia's long, black hair.

Both describe the style they chose for the Portofino model house as "a combination of clean lines, California-style with over-scaled furniture, even Asian modern."

Adds Ivy: "The formulas are based on classical proportions that have withstood the test of time. They are universally pleasing. You get a good design and you tweak it. Just like chefs might do traditional dishes, then do fusion."

Yes, one can *oido* or do a project by instinct, but a really good designer can "just as easily do a big hotel and a small project," whereas the untrained will be overwhelmed by a huge project.

Cynthia notes that it can be easier to do a hotel than a residence. But in 90 percent of the residences they have dressed up, friendships have been forged with the clients.

Neutral palette

The sisters do much traveling to see the latest design trends and buy fabrics and furniture. Both have also worked in the United States—Ivy in San Francisco and Los Angeles, Cynthia in New York.

"In the States, there are catalogs, and furnitre dimensions are correct," Cynthia says. "In Manila, to develop a line of furniture, we had to work really hard with suppliers. We brought home a lot of furniture. You need the right pitch or recline on chairs. We learned a lot. Here, you have to check everything."

What exactly is their design style?

Both are partial to taupe, champagne, beige, gold, and, yes, even baby pinks for nurseries. "Our palette is neutral. It is the accessories, the artwork that will bring color to the space. We like a blank canvas to showcase a room's artwork and accessories."

"If I were to build from scratch," Ivy explains, "I would be a minimalist. Most interior designers tend to be minimalist.

They agree that every home has a "vibe" and it is "what the space dictates." The owner's perception of what he wants for a space can be adjusted, the sisters say, "but you can't adjust what the space wants." The interior designer should feel out this vibe.

This is why space could look good as rendered on paper, but still need altering due to discoveries made "when one goes to the site."

Being fair

For this tandem, being "fair" with clients means guiding them and taking the trouble to understand them. Sometimes this means studying heirloom furniture or other pieces with sentimental value that clients would not part with.

Also, about 90 percent of clients consult a geomancer before having their home designed. This is not a problem to the Almario sisters. Even they make an effort to know the clients' birth dates, and use the information to position certain items.

Sometimes, however, little problems can arise. For instance, Ivy says, when a husband's bed has to face south "when the view is on the northern side."

What will never be found in any of their projects?

"Gilded furniture. Italian furniture that's overly ornate, rococo."

The sisters work with 16 employees. Ivy does the overall concept and space planning, and then they discuss the look they want to achieve. Cynthia selects the furniture and fabrics, and "runs it" by her sister.

Cynthia's admiration for her sister-partner is given the highest expression when she says: "Ivy cures everything."

A vision of livable communities

From page 1

A member of six American organizations that make up a think tank for efficient land use while looking at "all the mistakes" of American planning, Palafox says Manila had the wrong zoning models: "We copied Hollywood, California. If we had only followed the prescription of Daniel Burnham for Manila to be developed more like Paris and Venice, we would not be in such a mess."

Palafox—through his firm, Palafox Associates where he is principal architect, urban planner, founder and manager-partner—is Brittany Corp.'s master planner for its Brittany Bay and Portofino commercial areas.

In Europe, he notes, shops are normally situated on the ground floor, and upstairs are residences. "We did that before the war, but not anymore," he says. "*Tayo lang hindi gumagawa niyan ngayon* (we're the only ones who don't do that today)."

'Livable'

Palafox vows that all the areas for which he has done the overall concept and master planning will be "walkable, bikeable, livable."

He notes that in major city centers worldwide—Paris, London, New York, Boston, Oxford, Tokyo, Singapore, to name only a few—places to live in are located above places of work, or shops and restaurants are below one's residence, within walking distance.

In the US today, he says, zoning means that places to shop, dine, and worship, and even health care facilities, are within a community, where there is also a variety of residential designs. "So one can choose to live either in single detached homes or above stores."

In the communities he is currently master-planning today, Palafox sees to it that instead of blank walls, he puts "windows facing the street." This is the same advice he once gave Metro Manila Development Authority chairman Bayani Fernando, who apparently took it to heart and proceeded to ban solid outer walls in his hometown of Marikina. There is a higher incidence of heinous crimes where there are high walls, Palafox notes, citing a survey done in Florida after the 9/11 attack. Besides, he says, windows "encourage more community."

He recalls that in the early 1950s, homes also had balconies and porches. "You could connect more with your neighbors."

For the commercial section of Brittany Bay, Palafox envisions retail shops on a "small scale" which "encourages more eyes on the street … shopping, dining … we are planning to introduce al fresco dining there." He promises Portofino dwellers that they will have "convenient, connected, walkways" to encourage walking.

Visionary mentors

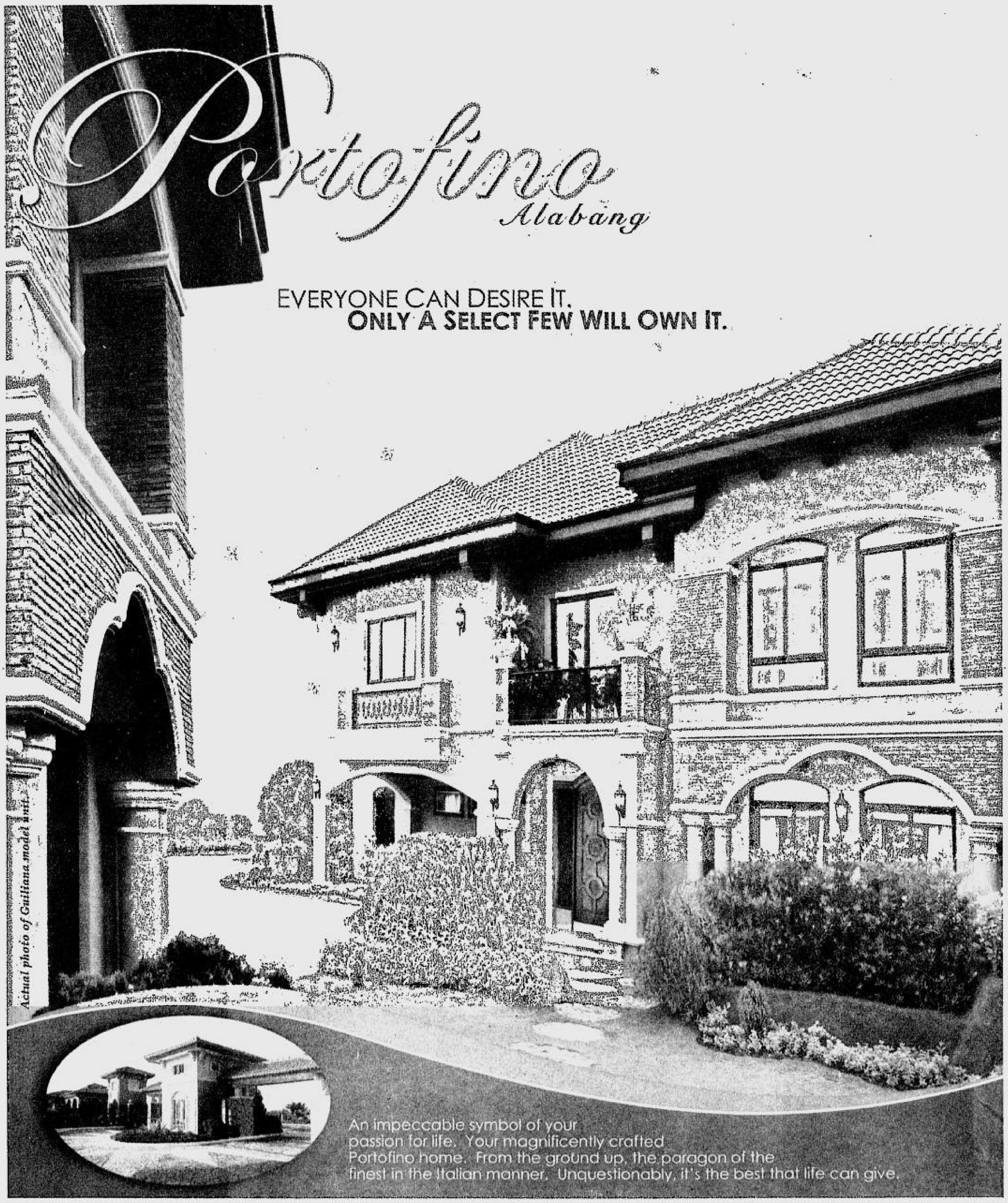
He sees difficulty in planning urban development in this country. "The challenge is that you have to be more creative because you don't get much input from government. You do your own research, make your own guidelines."

Still, he loves his work. He puts in 12 to 16 hours a day and credits his firm's success to three things: honesty and integrity in design, hard work, and international exposure.

He feels "lucky" to have learned the ropes from "visionary men," such as businessman Henry Sy, who convinced him to come home to Manila from Dubai; Eugenio Lopez Jr., who commissioned him to do Rockwell and the island of Guimaras; Enrique Zobel, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, and John Gokongwei Jr. who all gave him landmark projects.

How does he find working with foreign architects and urban planners?

"Very challenging, because of the egos involved," he says, "as long as you don't act up all at the same time."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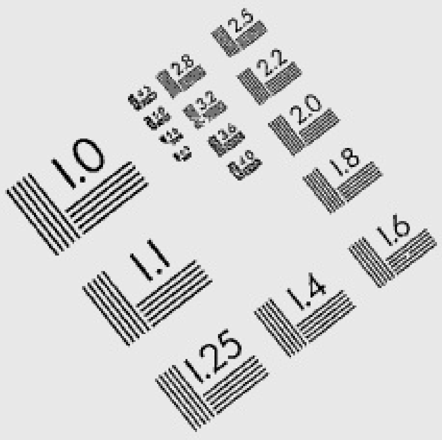
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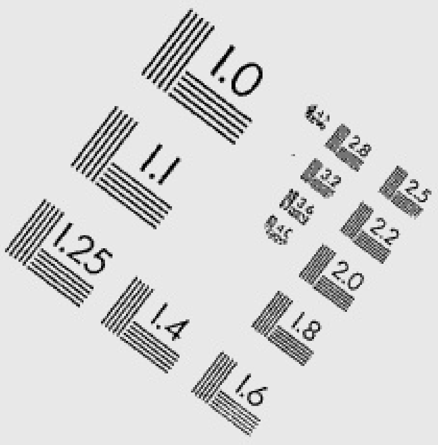
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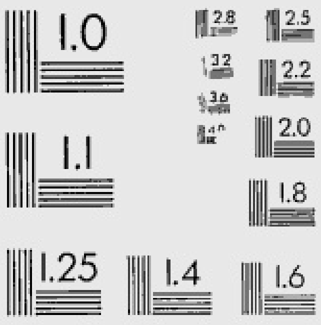
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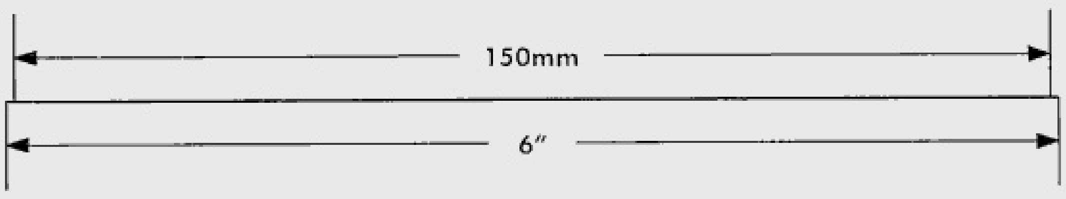

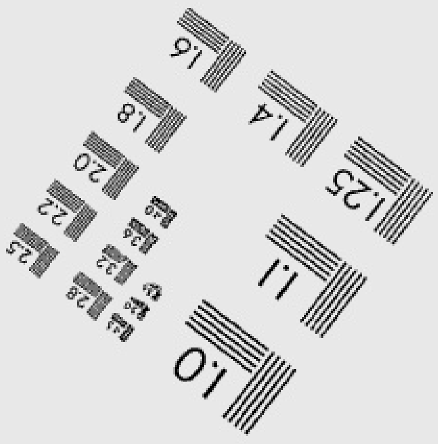
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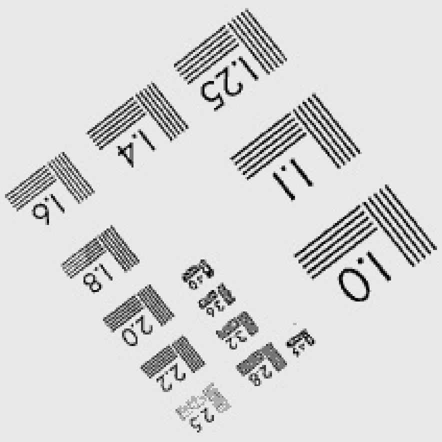
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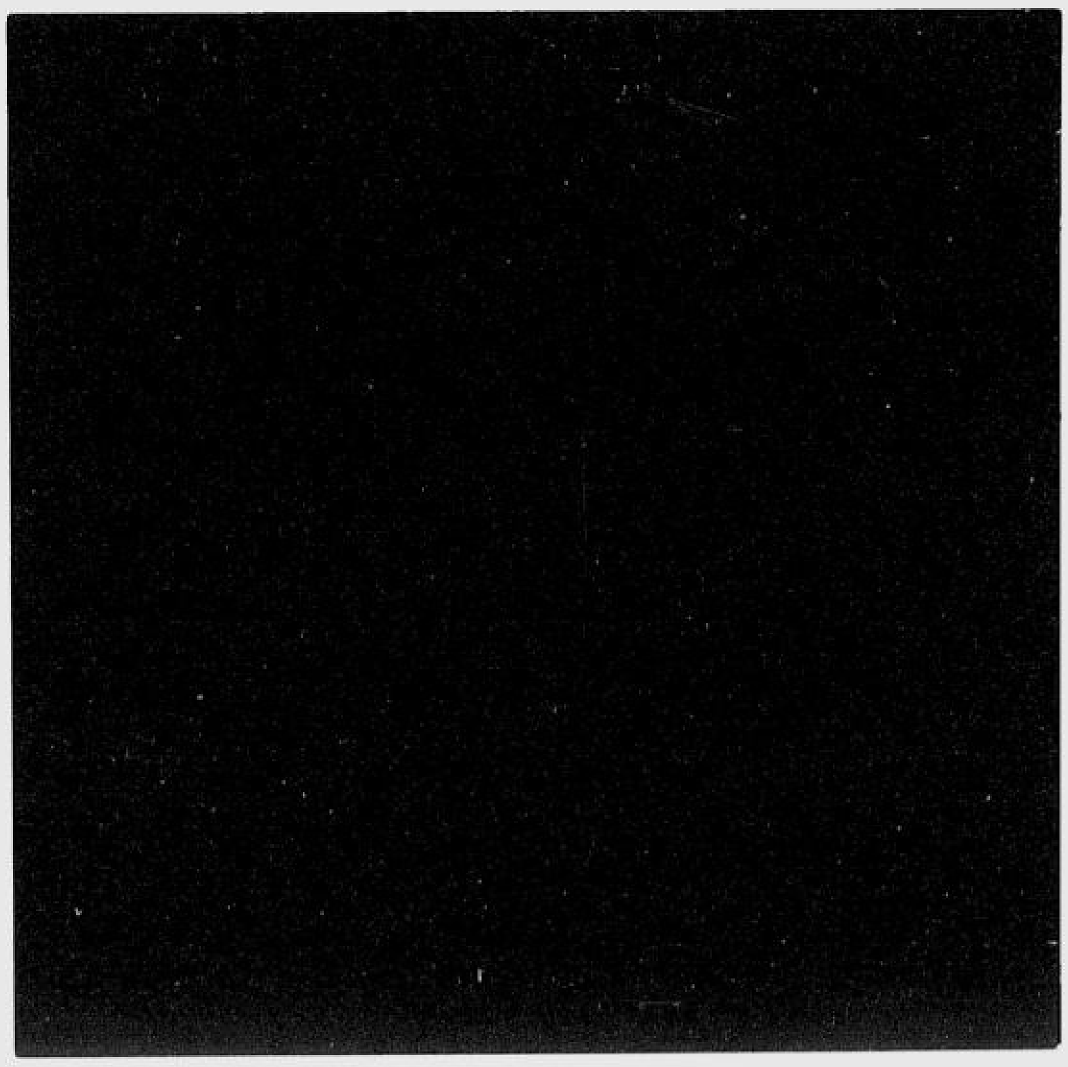

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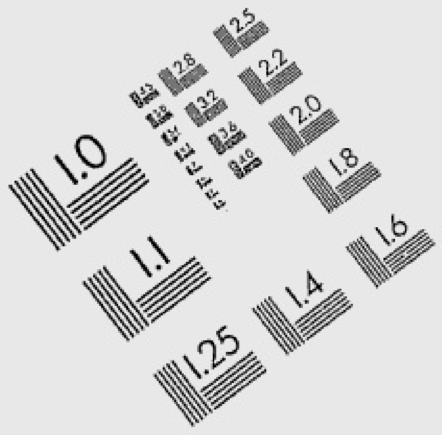

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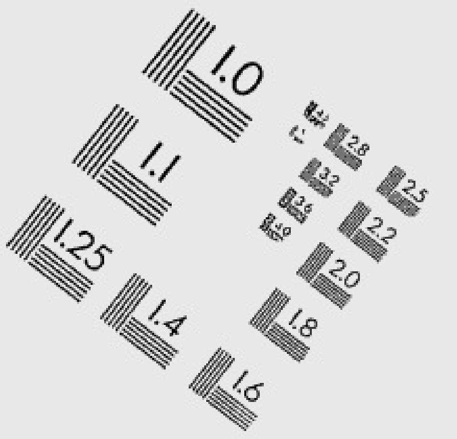

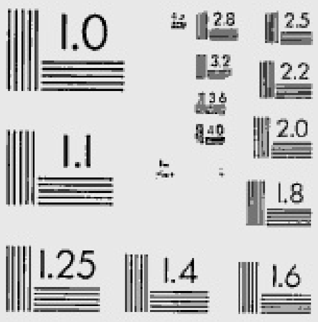
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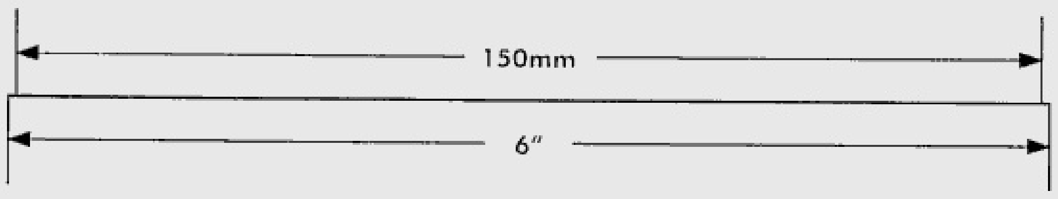

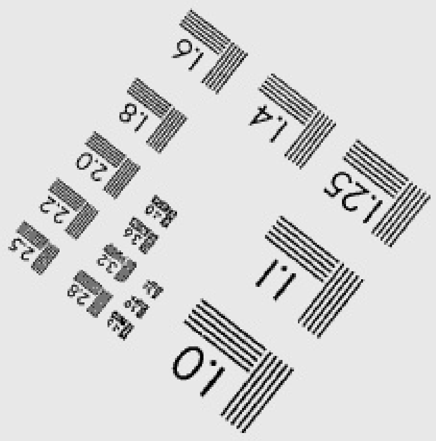

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